

THE CONNOISSEUR.

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TO OUR READERS.

On the threshold of a new year, and entering upon a second volume, "THE CONNOISSEUR" may be expected to particularize the intentions of its supporters. Indeed the attempt to arrest the attention of a public already incumbered by pretenders to analyzation of thought in all its subdivisible minuteness exacts the statement of some singularity of purpose for its justification. When every subject appertaining either to physical truth, which only experiment can authenticate; or to those still more extensive realms of mental imagery, dominated by the autocracy of taste, or sentiment, or fancy, each, (in its very name, evasive of agreed exactness and accepted definition,) has its assumed dictator. When mankind has been so crammed with useful knowledge that intellectual operations for domestic consumption have become an useless squandering of mental effort; and the raw material of thought, like any vulgar exchangeable commodity, subjected to the general regulations of divided labour, as only utilizable at a profit by those who do it wholesale, for the supply of others, and as professed dealers in the article. When the accumulation of prepared production, already in the market, so far exceeds all hoped for demand, that works which thirty years ago would have ensured immediate fortune and immortal fame to their contrivers, are flung aside by listless repletion, from the entire impossibility to what is eminently a reading age, of any examination of their claims, or separation of their small voiced appeal from the multitudinous *brouhaha* of more clamorous suitors. While the never ebbing flood is receiving continued increase from the streams of repulsed superabundance discharged from every other craft by which existence is supported, and to which the qualifications for admission are to read and write! While the embryo barrister with virgin palm as yet unconscious of a client's gold, philosophically prepares himself for becoming (with equal alacrity) either the ruthless instrument of legal tyranny, or the pathetic defender of oppressed feebleness, even as the cat may jump! While an individual, that no attorney on the rolls would intrust for the recovery of a contested jackass, will not hesitate to promulgate his opinions with the solemnity of an oracle; and spin his eels of sentiment, as if he had undertaken a profession in which hypocrisy was not an essence, and the successful sustainment of iniquity a triumph! While our universities teem with their daily multitude, who have yet done nothing but read, and, proposing to do nothing but re-write what they have read, are prepared to transpose the alphabet to any extent of volumes! While mere literary education is assumed to confer general knowledge, and a smattering of the humanities to bestow profundity in every thing else, and while no other publication unconnected with a party has had the hardihood to produce itself; on what pretension does the Connoisseur come forward; and what are its testimonials of intended usefulness?

46. 1. 8. 13.

Man is a being made up of perceptions equally susceptible of the extremes of enjoyment and of suffering. The whole struggle of his life is the obtainment of the one, and the avoidance of the other. Vulgarity of enjoyment, while it dulls perception, produces inconvenience and pain. All excess of physical indulgence is so balanced; but the mental capacity for receiving pleasure gains intensity by continued use, and increased appetite from incessant nourishment. This capacity, differing in degree along with the variety existing in individual organization, positively exists in all as universally as any physical distinction that characterizes our nature. Now the aim of art being to act upon these perceptions agreeably, the principles necessary for its direction are the laws that govern their excitement; and the aim of those interested in the permanent and general improvement of artistic production is the discovery of those principles.

The Connoisseur would urge the endeavour of the intellect of our period to their discovery.

Art has been assumed by lettered ignorance as matter for mere opinion; and received but as some phantom of the mind, depending more on the individual engaged in its contemplation than the positive qualities bestowed on it by its producers. It has thus been made the victim of successive fashions in pretenders to thought: at one time advancing to robust health; and then, as if infected by disease, reduced to such extremity of debility, as to re-exact for its recovery the nursing and attentiveness of infancy. The period of its triumph once passed, the principles lost on which its greatness was founded, and the tables of the law, by which every thing connected with artistic execution was made to operate upon the mind so successfully, are gone with its discoverers. The succeeding tyro, not, as in science, starting from the point attained by those who should have been his harbingers, wanders among untried theories, and wastes his best days in experimenting for originality only attainable by fulfilment of those immutable regulations before discovered, but again to be looked for. To be sought in vain among the heap of unfiltered crudities with which this scribbling age is feculent.

In the exact sciences, we will say chemistry, the preparatory portion of a student's education is the obtaining acquaintance with all that has been already fulfilled, and acquiring familiarity with those natural laws that regulate exactly chemical combination and analysis. It is not sufficient to him to know the thing is so, but the immediate why it is so is equally the object of his inquiry. In discussing subjects relating to such sciences, the professor does not assert as fact that which is but opinion, nor venture opinion until prepared to submit the reasons that support it. The term aesthetic, that spangles so much ignorance in art, cannot show its face in chemistry, and in that science only its professors are permitted to judge of its professors. So it is with all the certain sciences; and so

it is that they have progressed certainly; sometimes advancing slowly, sometimes by bounds; but never retrograding. So it is that modern chemistry has appropriated the experience of the alchemist, and built up everlasting science on the foundation prepared by obsolete folly. But that folly, although its proposed task was a baseless hypothesis, included in its attempts an exact record of its failures, and systematically despised mere literary interference.

The Connoisseur upholds its absolute faith that every thing in the universe we inhabit is regulated by laws as definite as those of any known science whatever; and asserts the grand obstacle to the discovery of those having domination over art to be attributable to the generally adopted, and almost universally unsuspected, error of listening to the opinions of men possessing no sufficient credential for their dictatorship; or such long previous familiarity with the thing discussed as to have become its knowers.

We deny that the usual course of education confers the *fitness for every thing* assumed by literary people. From books we do but imbibe opinions from others; without, as a consequence, being enabled to think ourselves. The judgment so cultivated is opinion on opinion, not opinion on the thing itself, and the mind is swamped by authoritative dictums, having often little more than plausibility for their support. The basis of opinion is not inquired into, and, received without examining, becomes a dogma; as such, is, like a precedent in law, often carelessly, but always confidently, applied to circumstances with which it has nothing in common. On essentially literary subjects that have their existence but on paper this system is not an evil. It is the battle-ground on which such questions may be best discussed, and the warriors are fairly harnessed for the fight; but the non-literary productions of intelligence and execution, that refresh the intervals of labour and produce intensity of enjoyment proportional to individual acuteness of perception, must be submitted to some other law of appreciation than that acquired from books. Why should mere opinion be applied to harmony of colour in a picture—more than to harmony of colour in music? Are the notes of a common chord a matter of selection permitting difference among critics; or are the rules of counterpoint open for discussion to any that can wield a pen with fluency? No; the knaves dare not meddle with acknowledged principles, without an expenditure of labour in obtaining their acquirement they are too idle to encounter. Music is emancipated from such yoke, and we do not look back to the fifteenth century for the classic among its professors.

We believe that all connected with mental perception is regulated by principles analogous to those of music; and would urge the effort of our period to their definition.

The true perception of what educated civilization has made the standard of the beautiful in form, is not possessed naturally in all its fulness; but, like the acknowledged truth of philosophy, is only sufficiently appreciated by those who have devoted much time to its contemplation. It is the result of experiment and logical demonstration, proving fitness. The perception of the agreeable exists in all; but all are not equal to give the true reason for their satisfaction. The ability to do this is the credential of the critic; and the man that takes for granted anything in art without enquiry as to cause, is unable to furnish a reason for his own impressions; and, consequently, unfit to influence those of others.

The term taste is but a shirking of the critic's duty. It is but insisting on mystery in that which should be considered a thing dominated entirely by principles. Principles, we do not

here assert as known; (for that cannot be insisted on as known which is not supported by agreed acknowledgment;) but which, until known—until fortified by general acquiescence, should be assumed by the critic in his assigned motive for opinion. From the value of these assumed principles the public would obtain some estimate of the writer's fitness; antagonist opinions would resolve themselves into the discussion of principles; and established truth would be the consequence.

Few artists arrive at eminence without proportionate consciousness of motive; often in their power to communicate in words, but more frequently only translatable from their works. It is impossible to contemplate a picture by Paul Veronese without a perception of art built throughout on intention, nothing rests on impulse. Of Garrick, Kemble, and Kean, no work remains, yet it is certain they had intentions. Their intentions were their principles. We have now no clue to principles but works. The actor's works die with him.

All peculiarities in art arise from preponderance in the perception of certain elements, endowing them with more than due prominence, and manner or style in the result.

We would propose the aim of criticism to be the discovery of these elements; the establishment of a code of principles founded on them. Notices on such subjects, always emanating from irresponsibility, the document itself must contain its credentials. All that we exact from the critic is specification. Compelled to this, and driven from their florid generalities, the crowd of dictators that, incubus-like, now press upon art and artists, would be winnowed of much bran, the press relieved from acres of solemn nonsense, and the remaining few assume an usefulness now stranger to their labours.

We might perorate this address by claiming something of credit for the independent, unbiassed character of the notices contained in the Connoisseur; but we have been too cognizant in our short career with obstacles to the continuation of such a system in a public print, for the indulgence of much vituperation against those who have thrown it aside as a burthen fatal to progression. Works established on the sole principle of pecuniary speculation must submit themselves to pecuniary views in their direction. The intention of the Connoisseur is the establishment of a harbour of refuge for unbiassed opinions on art and acting; accompanied by such specification, as shall expose all that is wrong in the principles on which its judgments are founded to immediate refutation. In such intentions it determines to persevere; a singularity of purpose alone sufficient to excuse its intrusion on the public.

H. C. M.

MUSIC AS AN ART.

WHATEVER the amount of sensation producing pleasure, which is capable of being conveyed by an object whether visible, tangible or audible, varies according to the greater or less amount of susceptibility in the individual. Where this sensibility is small in degree it is affected only by very palpable applications—where on the contrary it is great, the most delicate applications alone produce pleasurable sensations, the coarser and grosser creating only repugnance. In this power of receiving is comprised in a great degree the capability of judging between the two opposite extremes, for it is evident the individual of small sensibility is incapable of entering at all into the ideas of him who possesses the greater amount, and the one of great sensibility hardly understands the stern stuff of which his opponent is compounded, but in either case the Alpha and Omega is confined to sensation alone, which

belonging to animals, as well as mankind, claims no connection with intellect.

In applying these remarks to the taste, a disciple of Ude, or one of the *Jury de Degustateurs* of the almanack *des Gourmands* whose palate naturally susceptible has been rendered still more so by cultivation, would shudder at fat bacon, the delight of the English rustic: and this latter would no doubt wonder how any one could relish such trash as is collected in a *ragout* or *salmi* or what there could possibly be in a *Dindon aux truffes* which the said almanack describes as *un des plus grands bienfaits que, dans son incommensurable libéralité, la providence ait dagné accorder aux Gourmands*. Now let us consider in what estimation would Monsieur Ude be held by either of these. The jurymen would place him on wisdom's pinnacle—the rustic would look upon him with contempt. Now, a third party being called in to decide impartially, would first dismiss from his mind the effects produced whether of the *Dindon aux truffes* on the jurymen, or the fat bacon on the rustic, and set himself to consider what, from the nature of the case, would be the positive amount of intellect brought into play to produce Monsieur Ude or his equivalent; beginning the inquiry, he would consider whether the mind was at all concerned, and though he might be ready to grant that a certain amount was necessary, yet that the mere powers of distinguishing tastes however exquisite could only require peculiar organization, and but very little thought or reflection to decide on the result, the palate being the principal cause of production; now, seeing that the cultivation of the palate *per se* can have no reference to direct intellectual operation, the art of tickling it is only a perception of certain combinations which are then by experiment found to be agreeable or disagreeable, rules are thus formed capable too of certain modifications, and any one with a natural sensibility applying himself to the subject might be the cause of exquisite palatial sensations in individuals peculiarly organized. A mere experiment of combinations of ingredients cannot be called an intellectual operation, even though we should agree with Dr. Ffolliott in Crotchet Castle, when he says, "I can taste in my mind's palate a combination which, if I could give it reality, I would christen with the name of my college, and hand it down to posterity as a seat of learning indeed." Our readers may perhaps smile at this appeal to the taste, but let any one read the pages of the *Almanack des Gourmands* and they will find in what estimation as regards intellect the science of Gastronomy is held by its admirers and professors.

Let us now apply this doctrine to the ear, which in its uncultivated state may be said to delight only in noise but with civilization becomes gradually more sensitive; the rude sounds that once seemed delightful now become disagreeable, and more pleasing harmonies are sought for. Certain rules are at length discovered, from the circumstance that peculiar combinations and successions are more agreeable than others, in this way it is felt that a succession of thirds or sixths are pleasing, and other combinations and successions are positively harsh, thus consecutive fifths are only deemed fit for a chorus from the infernal regions, and discords which in themselves contain nothing very soothing become acceptable only as being the preparations for the anticipated resolution; but whatever complication may be attained in the advance of this science of sounds must depend solely on the sensibility of the ear, for the operation of mind abstractly considered can have little or nothing to do with the determination of what is agreeable or not, the production of a melody however fascinating in its effects then has no more to do with intellect than the composition of the doctor's sauce.

We have been led into a consideration of this subject from reading an ably written letter in the last number, signed a Lover of Truth and Music, in which the writer endeavours to controvert a position we had advanced to the effect that musical composition was not an intellectual operation. The only fault we have to find with this otherwise forcible letter, is, that all is bare assertion, not one word being advanced that can in any way be called a proof; the strength of the observations consisting in a glowing description of the effects of music—to this we ourselves most willingly agree, but that the cause is in any intellectual development we have before entered our protest, and will now girt ourselves to the task of defending. Before, however, we enter on the subject we must make exception to the writer claiming that he has already truth on his side of the argument—

"It were to be wished that calm and temperate discussion, free from personality, in aesthetics—the ground of all others where one may be calm, yet fervent—obtained a firmer footing here; and that opponents would argue for truth, and not for victory. If a writer find he is wrong, he should not scruple to say so; but few have the magnanimity to confess to error; though I hope your correspondent in this case will be heroic to a sufficient extent to withdraw or qualify what he has said."

We quite agree with our correspondent in his wish for calm and temperate discussion free from personality, though we have a horror of the term aesthetics and we also would be understood to argue for truth and not for victory; but why we should be called upon to withdraw or qualify when we are not proved wrong is beyond our ken, since too we only find assertions not proofs in the writer's observations.

The antiquity of music argues nothing for its intellectuality—but that "the ancients excelled in it and if one may trust tradition surpassed the moderns"—we must beg leave to differ from, for it would appear that they knew nothing of modulation and harmony, and melody alone however beautiful becomes very fatiguing by repetition. On this subject we will cite a passage from Monsieur Fétis' History of Music. "The question whether the Greeks or the Romans had any knowledge of harmony has been warmly controverted, but to no purpose: since it is impossible to allege any proofs on either side. The equivalent of the word harmony is nowhere found used in the Greek or Latin treatises of music which have reached our times. The air of an ode to Pindar and that of a hymn to Nemesis, with some other fragments, are all that has been preserved of the ancient Grecian music, and in them we find no traces of chords, in fact the form of the lyre and of the harp, the small number of their strings which could not be modified like those of our guitars, those instruments being destitute of necks; all these reasons, I say, give much probability to the opinion of those who do not believe in the existence of harmony in the music of the ancients." If then the ancients were ignorant of modulation and harmony, it can hardly be supposed that they could surpass the moderns. And the story of the Thracian bard however beautiful as a poetic fiction, can seriously have nothing to do with an argument of this kind.

But we will now go to the gist of the writer's observations—"allow music to be sensual, then so is painting, sculpture, and architecture." Now the question is not whether one sense is more sensual than another for that implies an absurdity, but whether the intellect required for the production of Don Giovanni is the same as that required to produce the Transfiguration, or the Venus de Medici, or the Parthenon, for we are disposed to agree and acknowledge that the mere effect of music on the senses would be greater than the sight of a picture, a statue, or a building, though this even may be questioned by some.

Now in speaking of music as an intellectual operation, in comparison with any one of the other three, say painting, we must remark that for music it requires but an aptitude or peculiar disposition for the perception of the effects of sound, either singly in succession, or combined; certain rules once learnt, these may be continued *ad libitum* and *ad infinitum* with scarce any assistance from the intellect, higher degrees of perception giving greater power of expression both in melody and harmony. A man may be a musical genius and show extraordinary powers as is indeed mostly the case with those who have excelled, even before the intellect could be developed; *e.g.* Mozart himself. But a painter whatever early aptitude may be shown can never be really called into play before the mind has been cultivated. Not only must a painter have perception but reflection. Comparison and analysis are constantly required in the progress of a picture from the first conception to the last finishing touch,—but in the combination of sounds the ear alone becomes the sole judge—and can receive little or no assistance from the intellect, because sounds which are musical in themselves alone afford pleasure, and consequently their combination also, however infinitely varied by a Mozart or Rossini. The fall of water—the gentle murmur of the breeze, or to quote the words of the writer, “the thrilling sweetness of the nightingale breathing no earthly passion, the strains of the exulting lark, so full of joy and ringing clearness, or the solemn pealing of the resounding ocean, the rushing of the invisible wind, above all the human voice may be embodied.” We grant this and more also, and they all produce sensations, the effects of these sounds acting agreeably on the nervous system, and so in a greater degree, perhaps, is a first-rate composition. In the paragraph,

“If music then be capable of producing such effects—if the very air it breathes is golden, and if it purify and appeal to the soul through the senses, so that even it is imagined it may be a joy of heaven; if it charm, soothe, tranquillize—blend even with religious ceremonies everywhere, and on hal-lalujahs waft imagination beyond the visible, while it uses no baser means to effect all this than the poet, or the painter, would employ, how can it be inferior to any branch of art?”

The writer unconsciously betrays the mistake he has made throughout,—the effect we grant,—but this being granted, in no wise gives inference that the cause of production is intellectual; and then by the query how can it be inferior to any branch of art? amounts to nothing when only the effects are displayed as proofs of intellectual power. The answer is simply that the cause does not require the intellectual power requisite for the other branches, and this we think we have sufficiently proved by a reference to some of the peculiar faculties required for each, and that also more of these individually and collectively are necessary in the development of a painter than what would go to make a composer, who if organized for music needs little or no assistance from the intellectual faculties; all originating in one which consists in nothing more than in a peculiar power of devising a succession or combination of sounds producing agreeable results. A composer's whole life may therefore be considered merely as a dreamy existence of possible effects from music,—indicative of feelings and passions,—but for abstract thoughts they are hardly within his range, for let any one who ever he may be, try to give effect in music to the soliloquy, “To be or not to be,” and even our very able advocate for love of truth and music would be obliged to give it up as impossible.

This error of estimating music as some do, results from some confusion of the terms creative and imitative as applied to the different branches of art. It is contended by these musical advocates that the composer is a creator so to speak, and that the painter is merely an imitator; this is a fallacy having reference to terms alone. The term creator necessarily implies a bound-

less power, ranging free and unfettered: but such is not the case with the composer, his art is restricted within certain rules, nay also certain limits of expression; for although feeling and passions are in his power, the range of thought as we have observed can scarcely be said to be capable of expression: how then can the term creative especially be referable to one placed in such distance vile. The compass of sounds although capable of infinite changes is limited, their power is only able to express feelings and passions. But what are they? Can they be called intellectual, man but shares them with the lowest of created beings. Thus far then only is the composer like the kaleidoscope, creative of ever varying changes of the means at his command. His own feelings and passions guide him in his art. Intellect forming little or no part in the process required. But let us now turn to our painter, or sculptor, his means are limited to imitation—granted—but imitation of what? of feelings and passions? no indeed. Not only of these but of thought which is there impressed. See yon picture, it speaks, it breathes,—the countenance itself conveys of the idea of intellect;—it is imitated, true, but it imitates not merely the outer form, but through that grasps at and reveals the mind within. Look also at the dying Gladiator:—

I see before me the gladiator lie,
He leans upon his hand, his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony.—*Child Harold.*

Again, it may be argued that imagination is necessary, and in this respect the composer is equal to the poet. Yes, in so far as we have shown the means within his reach, he may be; but the poet is also a metaphysician, he deals with the inward workings of the human mind; and here the very nature of the musical art, throws up an impenetrable barrier to the composer. The deep thoughts of the mind are beyond his reach, consequently beyond his ken, he heeds them not, he seeks them not; the highest point of the art is gained without, and he confines himself, nay is confined to his feelings and passions alone. Where then is the boasted intellect? C. J.

MR. WALLACK.

We remember seeing Mr. Wallack play Tressell at the first appearance of Edmund Kean as Richard III. before a London audience. The finished truth and feeling with which that little bit was executed by a very young man, possessing a countenance never since equalled on the stage, drew shouts of applause from an audience familiar with first-rate acting. Every thing great was expected from so much physical fitness in positive possession, and so much of mental capacity as was supposed to have been indicated by that performance. But Mr. Wallack has, in great measure, disappointed the expectations of his then admirers, and, with almost every quality that should make an actor eminent in all, has not now a reputation for being first-rate in any of Shakespeare's characters.

While never, for a portion of a sentence, misunderstanding his author; never passing a point unnoticed, or marking one in a wrong place; with a voice agreeable, articulate, and forcible in all its intonations; with action always graceful and appropriate; in attitude, as regards trunk, bust, and upper limbs, at all times reminding you of a Vandyke portrait; and a countenance still retaining much of masculine beauty; Mr. Wallack seldom succeeds in satisfactorily occupying the mind of that portion of the audience whose approbation is worth all the rest; the approbation of all the rest being included in it. Why is this? The vivifying quality is wanting; the fire that should

animate the whole is ever absent.— Mr. Wallack wants intensity. He lacks the quality of thoroughly persuading his audience that he believes what he says. While admiring the art of the actor, the art is too apparent: his resources have our applause; we observe their ingenuity of contrivance, but not being deceived by them we are always critical. We rarely share his impulse, for he seldom exhibits an impulse that we may partake of.

'Tis from this deficiency Mr. Wallack has been termed a melo-dramatic actor. Melo-drama belongs to a world apart: nature is there conventional, and that conventionality is supposed successfully assumed by Mr. Wallack. For ourselves we have the same objection to his Don Cæsar de Bazan as to his Hamlet: he does but seem in either.

" 'Tis not alone his inky cloak
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,
That can denote it truly; these, indeed, seem,
For they are actions that a man may play."

These are all compassed by Mr. Wallack, but he seldom, too seldom, gives us evidence of having

" ——— That within which passeth show."

And we are rarely fully satisfied with his personation, but when the character he represents is uttering an untruth.

Thus his drunkenness in Don Cæsar de Bazan appeared throughout to be an assumption, and the character almost from beginning to end was acting, clever acting: but when, with all the energy of which the actor is capable he asserts the untruth,

"I am the king,"

The effect is striking: it is no longer acting: it is truth and impulse as being uttered with all the confidence of imposture.

This want of energy in execution that has rendered Mr. Wallack generally ineffective in the characters of Shakspeare has endowed him with peculiar fitness for the personification of Iago; which we do not hesitate to place among the most perfect performances at present on the stage. Intensity would be thrown away upon Iago. He is always in a mask. When on the scene with others he is an actor deceiving them, and when alone is endeavouring to deceive himself.

Until Kean showed play-goers what might be made of the character of Othello, his ancient was considered principal. G. F. Cooke acted Iago to the Othello of Pope, a man of lungs and nothing else. Kean himself played Iago long before he thought of personating the Moor. Scarcely surpassed in business by any other of Shakspeare's villains, it is no mean praise of any man to say that he has been perfectly successful in the part; and we again assert that Mr. Wallack has established himself as a Shaksperian actor by that performance. In attributing this success to peculiar fitness that is some obstacle to general eminence, we do but point out an instance of what we believe to be universal; that full success must be accompanied by individuality of organization restrictive to variety. As we have before asserted; the pretender to versatility is a cheat—believe him not.

Iago starts with contempt for honesty and truth; and after marking their possessor with his scorn, he tells Roderigo, such confidence suiting his occasion,

" ——— Others there are,
Who, trimmed in forms and visages of duty,
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves;

And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
Do well thrive by them, and, when they have lined their coats
Do themselves homage, These fellows have some soul;
And such a one do I profess myself."

Again,

"In following the Moor I follow but myself,
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
But *seeming* so, for my peculiar end:
For when my outward action doth demonstrate
In compliment extern, 'tis not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at: I am not what I am."

Now the difficulty for the actor to overcome in this character is the representing so much of apparent loyalty as may excuse the deception of the other characters in the play, without at any time expelling the audience from his confidence. He must appear to them at all times a scoundrel. To them

"His flag and sign of love
Must be indeed but sign."

In our statement of Mr. Wallack's fitness for doing this, we would not be supposed to underrate his art. We would but say how much his art has been assisted by his fitness. There is no actor upon the stage with more variety of conception; possessing sounder judgment of what a character should be, or greater scope of elocution in the executing his conception; but in no other character has his peculiar fitness been any thing but an obstacle to complete success.

The rollicking humour in which he dresses his knavery with Roderigo, was delicately true; and what was mere seeming in Don Cæsar de Bazan, was nature and life in Iago, from this mere quality of seeming being truth. It was not intended for real true fun, it was artifice throughout, to be thrown off when his dupe had left him. The famous passage beginning—

"Drown thyself? Drown cats and blind puppies."

In which he again and again insists that Roderigo shall put money in his purse, drew from the audience that heartiness of applause that never is paid for its full value.

It might be surmised that, although it may be quite true that Iago is acting when on the stage with others, when alone he must throw off disguise; but this is not the case. It is the curse of evil doers that their ingenuity is always tasked to frame some justification for their acts, and they have not more self-gratulation in a successful deceit employed upon another, than in the invention of an excuse for the villainy of their own nature. Notwithstanding his low estimate of humanity, Iago scarcely acknowledges to himself the meanness of the motive that has set him on. And while the audience know him for a disappointed man "that knows his price," and who had applied for promotion and been refused in favour of

"One Michael Cassio, a Florentine
That never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows
More than a spinster:"

He would persuade himself into the conceit of some less despicable motive for the mischief he is preparing, and he adds suspicion of some other wrong received as a make weight. He is jealous, forsooth! Iago jealous? Iago! The man that knew so well "how to love himself." The man with "reason" always ready to "cool his raging motions;" and who valued "virtue at a figs worth?" Such men are never jealous. Iago was a man more like to make advantage of his wife's incontinence, than to upbraid her for it. There is no support in the play for such suspicion. Emilia is alone with the Moor without allusions to such connections, while her love

for Desdemona, and grief at her loss, entirely repudiates suspicion. In spite of all this, the passage—

"I hate the Moor,
And it is thought abroad, that 'twixt my sheets
He has done my office; I know not if't be true,
But I for mere suspicion in that kind
Will do as if for surety."

Is laid hold of by most actors as an occasion for becoming sentimental. There are so few opportunities for coming out strong in the character, that we are always prepared to hear a burst of passion in this passage that shall bring applause from those that take for granted acting means noise. It is, unfortunately, a bit of burlesque that, however out of place, is mostly successful. The want of true intensity in Mr. Wallack reduced this to the exact value we think it ought to possess, an attempt at self-delusion very imperfectly successful, and the character of Iago escaped an inconsistency to which, by reality of intensity it would have been subjected.

If Shakspeare had intended to excuse or find a motive for the acts of Iago in the jealousy of his wife with the Moor, some real or apparent grounds would have been furnished; but excepting one sentence from Emilia, from the beginning to the end of the play there is no reference even to his own suspicions on the subject, except that we have quoted, and the following, also in soliloquy, also mingled with details of intended villainy, and clearly in the same course of thought. Though here we may remark, his intention assuming more decided form, and commencing moreover their career of action, he attempts to give more consequence to this assumed motive. Nay, he hesitatingly professes love for Desdemona, the assertion of which he almost immediately withdraws,

"Now I do love her too,
Not out of absolute lust, (though peradventure
I stand accountant for as great a sin,)
But partly lead to diet my revenge
For that I do suspect the lusty Moor
Hath leapt into my seat; the thought whereof
Doth like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards,
And nothing can or shall content my soul,
Till I am even with him, wife for wife."

If this passage is not an attempt at self-delusion on the part of Iago, the utterance of an unacknowledged wish to mingle something of sentiment with the common-place vulgarity of motive to which his brutal nature is the slave, it means nothing. Iago never indicates the slightest desire to rival his general, and this single allusion to such desire has not support whatever in any other portion of the play. Let us notice, that, on his former allusion to his jealousy of Othello, he had not yet imagined the means of consummating his revenge; but now his plot is prepared, and his successful rival in the favour of Othello, his Lieutenant Cassio must be his victim, a similar train of cogitation produces similar result,—

"I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip;
Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb;—
For I fear Cassio with my nightcap to."

He here absolutely interrupts the detail of his intentions to furnish himself with decency of motive.

We say under this view of these passages the execution of the character of Iago, by Mr. Wallack, was without blemish, supposing them to be the real expressions of jealousy,—

"Like a poisonous mineral, gnawing his inwards."

They were failures both as wanting truth from absence of sufficient intensity.

How natural and sufficient was the seeming put on by Iago:

"Iago.—What, are you hurt, Lieutenant?
Cassio.—Aye, past all surgery.
Iago.—Marry heaven forbid!

Cassio.—Reputation! reputation! reputation! O, I have lost my reputation. &c.

Iago.—As I am an honest man I thought you had received some bodily wound."

Throughout this scene there was sufficient seeming accompanied by exquisite truth in the reading to persuade Cassio of his friendship, without for one moment deceiving the audience.

To strengthen the assumption of endeavour at self-delusion on the part of Iago let us examine the following soliloquy that concludes the scene,—

"And what is he then, that says—I play the villain
When this advice is free, I give, and honest,
Probable to thinking, and (indeed) the course
To win the Moor again."
"How am I then a villain,
To counsel Cassio to this parallel course,
Directly to his good."

But the attempt fails, and in the following, he throws aside all such endeavour, never again to be taken up,—

"Divinity of hell!
When devils will their blackest sins put on,
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,
As I do now."

And again, in the only remaining soliloquy, there is no assumption of sentiment,—

"Iago.—I have rubbed this young gnat almost to the sense,
And he grows angry. Now whether he kill Cassio,
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,
Every way makes my gain; live Roderigo,
He calls me to a restitution large,
Of gold and jewels that I bobb'd from him,
As gifts to Desdemona
It must not be: If Cassio do remain,
He hath a daily beauty in his life,
That makes me ugly."

Here is a plain unfolding of sufficient motives to drive a mind like Iago's into contrivance and execution of any amount of crime; avarice, and envy, near in relationship and alliance with the disappointed ambition, his acknowledged primary incitement.

Again, supposing Iago's jealousy a reason satisfactory to himself, we should reproach Shakspeare for having omitted to produce it in the last scene. Once allow of its existence and how tempting the occasion for overwhelming the Moor, and meeting the stinging reproaches of Emilia; but no, Iago has nothing to say; he has no motive that he dares produce. He was not jealous; such toys had no effect upon his class of organization, and such a weakness would have been a whity-brown spot on his black mind, destructive to that concordance of parts in character, that is the crowning distinction of the Shakspearean drama.

We have thus endeavoured to account for two singularities in Mr. Wallack's career.—Why, with almost every quality belonging to a great actor, he has never been acknowledged as such by the public; and how it happens that he presents us with such excellence in the very arduous character of Iago. We think that we have made the one account for the other; but it yet remains to inquire whether this deficiency of intensity is attributable to listlessness and want of determination in the actor to use the power he possesses; or to natural inefficiency: whether it is referable to inclination or temperament. We think the fault may be shared between them. Determined effort would do much to remedy the evil, and high nervous temperament would not have tolerated its existence. The variety of characters undertaken by Mr. Wallack has given strength to careless confidence. He puts on a character like a pair of old boots; without thinking of the fit, providing it

pinches him no where. It is something late in his career for us to count on much reform in this particular; but for an actor of his fine judgment, in a better company and under a more efficient management, there are many characters besides Iago peculiarly adapted. We do not believe another on the stage could play Captain Absolute.

We had almost neglected to notice what was to us the only drawback on perfection in the acting of the character we have referred to. It was badly made up. We are not of those who think expression may be obtained from paint and powder; but it may be marred. Mr. Wallack made up Iago with rosy cheeks and all the attributes of a florid temperament. It should have been bilious. We are not asserting that villainy is peculiar to such temperament; that sallow people are knaves and florid complexions only appertain to good fellows; but, evil being presumed in either, they have their peculiar mode for its development, and the cool calculating craft of Iago has nothing that belongs to the appearance presented by Mr. Wallack in the character. These things seem trifles, but they make the artist.

THE TRUNK MAKER.

A CONCERT OF AMATEURS.

A man that hath not music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus;
Let no such man be trusted.—Shakspeare.

O Dan Shakspeare, what mischief has society to post to your account for the composition of the above quotation! If you could but contemplate the evils it has occasioned! It is to you we owe the universal affectation of the love for sounds of every description, that their contrivers choose to call music,

"The man that has not music in himself,
Let not such man be trusted."

Do you suppose an officer on half-pay swearing to everlasting affection for a comfortably jointured widow; a horse dealer; an attorney; or any other individual, who would do a large business with a confined capital, can afford to acknowledge their deficiency in the face of such a dictum from such an authority? Certainly not. The thing is unreasonable. They must all attempt to sing or play some how or other. If a man finds it an impossibility, he must insist there is music in himself, he can't get out, and make all the atonement in his power by enlisting himself as the devoted admirer and patient listener of and to all those possessing the required perseverance and intrepidity; and, as it is difficult, with the common average of auricular organization, to define with exactness where discord leaves off and harmony commences, those who would not peril their solvency find it much the safest to applaud everything that comes in their way, and submit themselves patiently to all the varieties of torture the divine art is capable of inflicting. Thus have our drawing-rooms become infested by pianos, and cornet-a-pistons, enormous basses, colossal trumpets, and heaven knows what other instruments. Thus has music already destroyed among us many employments, each of which is worth all it can do for us. It has defeated comedy, put tragedy to the route, and reduced the drama to something no more intellectual than it is itself. For those intelligent pleasures that demand a certain amount of application, it has substituted an idleness that exacts nothing. To enjoy the best of it you must have the sense of hearing, that is all. In families the piano has extinguished conversation and the love of books.

Concerts are now as common as they are vulgar, and it is difficult to pass between two houses without having a sonata thrown at you from one of them. But

"The man that has not music in himself
Let not that man be trusted."

And if you want to get a bill discounted, how can you help yourself? And thus, although there are comparatively few in London who have not laughed heartily at an amateur tragedy; and while an exhibition of paintings by amateur artists is a practical joke yet to be attempted; (the said amateurs being generally satisfied with prescribing laws for art and pronouncing judgment on professors;) he who should turn up his critical nose at what is called an amateur concert would peril being degraded by unanimous acclamation to a meanness of intelligence beneath that of the Bushman of South Africa, or the aborigines of New Holland as a brute and a savage having a heart in his bosom neither softer nor bigger than a cherry-stone, and worse than all

"A man not to be trusted."

Mind we do not denominate that a concert of amateurs of which the greater portion may be professionals at play; who, motivated by pure love for their art, and delight in its practice, have taken upon themselves the character of amateurs for the occasion. Neither do we select our *champ de bataille* in Belgrave Square or Portland Place, to which localities the thing we would describe is not indigenous. It is rather among a class with much spare time and limited incomes, consequently depending in a great degree upon their own contrivance for the means of letting off their leisure at the unfortunates within their field of annoyance; of which class none are more successful than your amateur musician.

There exists a portion of humanity that can neither sing nor play, and know it: of which portion repeated information has impelled ourselves to become a member. There is another portion of this same humanity who can neither sing nor play, but will not know it, and are deaf to any information on the subject. These villains meet together and mutually assassinate one another by agreement in what they call an amateur concert. Pretension passing by common consent for talent, screams for song, and noise for harmony.

We will not say the where or the when, for every drawing-room has its piano-forte, and every Miss has taken lessons in music; add but an amateur on the violin, and a Strephon that blows the flute or the oboe, (for all re-unions provide enough of resolute and determined singers to more than supply the vocal department), and cards may at once be magnificently headed "*Soirée Musicale*."

The spouse of a friend of our own is possessed by a mania for the concoction of these atrocities, believing them to create no small sensation in the world of fashion. They occur with her twice a week, the intervening days being devoted to the arrangement of the programme for the ensuing performance. Our readers may imagine this lady to be something of a musician. Undeceive yourself. She plays on no instrument, knows a common chord but by common report, has never even essayed to hum the air "*I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls*," and would scarce recognize that hacknied melody, were it played in her hearing without the words. But this ignorance, so far from being an objection, is the great recommendation of the *locale*, and why its *habitués* prefer it to any other. It is emancipation from listening to the eternal sonata, or from having to applaud with enthusiasm the horrid fantasia which

they know by heart, an inevitable recurrence of infliction if mine hostess be musical.

Now your true amateur, he who riots in his seventh heaven when sawing on the second fiddle in a quartette of Pleyel's, or recklessly walking into the alto of a quintette by Beethoven cares less than little about those that come to hear him. What is it to him whether or not the party be numerous or brilliant? What to him are the blooming damsels and the negus? What he would see is the desks placed, the music opened, the lamps lighted, and his accomplices at their posts. Behold him enter with the instrument of torture beneath his arm; his toilette is neglected, for he comes not to play the gay gallant among the belles, he comes to play the violin. Scarcely condescending to perceive the assembly, he looks anxiously for the amphytrion, and enquires, "have those gentlemen yet arrived?" If the reply be negative, his face lengthens, his brow gathers, he murmurs some sounds that no one hears, retires to a corner, there sits down and hangs his lip.

But your first chop amateur is rarely late; for him the meeting is too short. There are even among them some who after three quartetts are fresh and vigorous; undaunted and inexorable, they will have their bond and more; for them the smothered laugh and stunning whisper have no terrors; their singleness of purpose sets at nought all simple means of interruption; they play to please themselves, an enterprize that makes its own success.

We are early at this soirée that we may see the whole. In faith it is no child's game for our hostess; her day has been with various assistants, fully occupied. There was the tuner for the piano-forte; the reception and arrangement of the instruments; the everlasting breakage of the harp strings, collecting score, some portions always lent or lost; and, chief difficulty still, the choice of *morceau* to commence the onslaught:—The forlorn hope of the entertainment. True, there is the indomitable quartette; but will they be all four in time?

Two of our neighbours, a very charming young girl and her mamma, are engaged in an animated discussion, of which we hear the words,—

"Very well, mamma, if I am obliged to sing—you will see—I shall cry like a baby."

"Do so, and to-morrow I send away your piano-forte."

Poor girl! she wept for very dread of what to others was a joy. While she dried her eyes with her handkerchief our attention was arrested by the murmur of remark that heralded the entrée of a short, fussy, apothecary looking personage, conducting with triumphant air, a showily dressed female, who in her passage threw her smiles right and left among the assembly with a rapidity of execution that reminded us of the feats performed by the steam gun in the Adelaide Gallery.

"Here we are—my girl has brought all her collection, Italian, French, and English, Arias, chansonnettes and ballads; rondos and barcarolles. Oh! had you heard her sing last evening, ah! divine! In a party too among frequenters of the opera! Heavens! what success! It was astounding!"

The lady received the congratulations of the assembly as a conqueror would have received the keys of a town; floated stately on, her father repeating, "Heavens, how my daughter sung, yesterday!" and seated herself in face of the company, who looked upon her wonder-struck.

Attention! The enterprising four. *The four par excellence.* The primarius a superannuated *employé* of the navy office, cheered in retirement by devotion to his divine art, rehearsing in the morning what he would play at night, and lavishing on

his darling instrument all the little attentions a lover would devote to his mistress; keeping it near him in his bed, that the warmth of the blankets may render its tones soft and melodious; and determined upon an excursion to Italy that he may himself select the strings for it at Naples.

The second violin is a tall young man with low shoulders and a long neck, very pale, bilious and nervous, having when playing, the appearance of a lunatic, or of one possessed by a demon. His bow descends upon the catgut with such fury, and there is such a savage brutality in his arpeggios, it becomes a matter of congratulation that the edge of the weapon he wields is only horse-hair. Take away his fiddle, and his lamb-like nature returns, his excitement having its sole source in the satisfaction derived from the noise he is making.

The alto is a jolly looking large man, with an expansive countenance and waistcoat, prodigal of notices and condescensions, he enjoys in advance the happiness awaiting him, sounds his A with vigour, and looks round to mark the smile of expectation mantling the visages of his intended victims. He is a man of business, which business he never attends to. He but patches every *contretemps* with his favourite phrase of "all right presently."

Silence! Here's the bass! Your bass is a consequential personage: always coddled, petted, and flattered. Why? Has he more talent than other amateurs? Often not so much: but "*he plays the bass.*" There are crowds of violinists, pianists, flutists, &c., while it is very difficult to find an amateur devoted to the bass—a clumsy ungrateful instrument, so cumbersome for transport.

The concert is about to commence. Our hostess is here, there, and everywhere, entreating on her guests to sit, for there is no dependence upon those who stand. They will whisper, shuffle with their feet, and shift their places if the piece be tiresome. They are even capable of taking themselves away altogether. A thing to be prevented, if possible.

At last the signal is given: the tap with the bow is heard. They start at once; the assembly preserving a religious silence for the first twenty bars. But soon began the small-voiced remark, swelling by degrees to increased volume. The ladies criticize and scandalize, and the men talk politics or the theatre. Occasionally the friends or relations of the players venture a *hush! hush!*—or silence! and we hear bravo! bravo!—very good—capital!! which sinks again engulfed among a murmur of confidential chat. As for the indomitable four, they are too much absorbed in their own *charivari* to know or care what passes round them. All their struggle is to keep up with that infernal *secondo* and they succeed like a rowing match, the alto being always two boats or bars length behind his companions; but when a mighty jump has enabled him to overtake them at the end; he does not, when he recovers his breath, forget to observe, "I knew we should be all right presently."

The quartette is terminated and applause resounds from every part of the room. The indomitables are eager to re-commence; but already a precisely dressed youth with long hair and green spectacles preluding on the piano with all the confidence of A 1., and no mistake. He had chosen for his victim that beautiful air from the *Sonnambula*, "Still so gently o'er me stealing," which he executed—executed is the word, with a perseverance and determination worthy of a better cause.

In a concert of amateurs you must behave yourself; that is, you must not laugh loud, or utter audible sounds of discontent. Nevertheless, the youth in the green spectacles achieved but a whity-brown success, a charitable notice falling like a blight on one who would create an extasy, and he arose from

the piano disgusted with mankind. In his retreat he dislodged fans, handkerchiefs, and snuff-boxes, without attempting to pick them up; nay, he trod upon the toes of the apothecary looking father, who begged his pardon for being in the way; and, after upsetting one of the desks of the indomitables, threw himself upon an ottoman, and, with clenched teeth, muttered, "I was a fool to sing that here—it was beyond them."

In this time the lady of the house whose great ambition was to provide variety had proceeded to a corner of the room, from whence she extracted a small pale-faced boy, saying, "now it is your turn my little friend—ladies and gentlemen, you shall see—he is not quite eleven—and—you shall see."

We expected to see her young friend exhibit some feats of activity à la Risley; but as he sat himself down, or rather up, without any hesitation, before the piano-forte, we lent an attentive ear to his performance; and were rewarded by hearing a little man of eleven play like a little child of ten: a gratification with which we were of course delighted.

The next was a very truculent, broad-shouldered man, who sported a turn-up nose, immense whiskers, that met beneath his chin, and a forehead destitute of hair; producing, to a short-sighted person, the effect of having had his head attached to his shoulders the wrong end upwards. The French horn was his weapon, and he prologued by informing us that he intended an imitation of a stag hunt. The airs he played were inter-valled with sounds supposed to represent the barking of dogs, the cries of hunters, and the sobs of the stag at bay, combining altogether the most awful concatenation of sounds that was ever tolerated in civilized society.

We had began to consider ourselves the unfortunate animal that was being hunted, and prepared for showing our heels to our tormenter, when physical exhaustion terminated this remarkable effort; the performer promising us to be a boar on the next occasion, at which we promised ourselves we would not be present.

It was now the turn of the lady who sung so well yesterday, and it was evident, from the attention displayed by the assembly, that her performance was the very crack thing of the night. As a young man who was to accompany her led her to the piano-forte;—"Bring my music papa," said she with the air of a princess.

"Directly—di—rectly!" replied the apothecary looking father, bustling across the room into the ante-chamber, and returning immediately with a large packet that he was unrolling in his progress.

"Here—here is your music;—here it is. What are you going to sing?"

"I have not thought of it—dear me—I don't know. What shall I sing?"

"Well—we have enough here—you may choose.—Shall it be Italian? Here—here—no—aye—here's Norma."

"No, I will not sing Italian."

"Well—very well—here—here's the air from the '*Pré-aux-Clercs*' you sung so ma—a—a—agnificently yesterday. That is beautiful!"

"Oh! I am tired of that."

"Well then—here's '*Jean de Paris*.' And the apothecary looking father began to hum the air, beating time with his head,—"Quelle plai—sir d'é—tre en voy—ag—e jam—"

"Papa,—I would like something else better."

"Something else—very well—wait—here we have—Oh splendid—the '*Bride of Lammermoor*.' I know it by heart," and he began another humming noise, interrupted by,

"Oh! that is too melancholy, papa."

During this duette between father and daughter, very signi-

ficant glances were passing among the assembly; the secondo was observed to grasp his bow convulsively, on an impatient remark by the primarius of "we might have got through another quartette whilst this lady is choosing her song."

At length a bravura from the Syren was decided upon. Before commencing, the apothecary looking father saw that every one was seated, the doors shut, and conversations prologued; he then took a position on the stool of the bass, placed in the centre of the room, that he might better enjoy the sensation his daughter was about to produce. But her success was not proportioned to his expectations. She missed some passages, cracked in others, and mistook the time, till more than one had whispered, "what a pity we did not hear her yesterday."

"Catarrh," cried the apothecary looking father as he came upon his legs on the floor, mystified by the failure of his phenomenon, "Catarrh in the trachea."

The youth in the green spectacles rose upright in his seat and looked comforted, while the apothecary looking father threw a shawl round his daughter, saying, "you are fatigued—you sung too much yesterday." After leading her to her seat, he made the tour of the assembly, to explain to all present the effects of a catarrh in the trachea upon the singing faculty.

These little episodes are the redeeming qualities of an amateur concert, without such incidents it would be intolerable. What can we say of the concerto on the flute that followed? It was not good enough to reward attention, nor bad enough to make you laugh; producing the worst effect of all, monotony.

We had hoped that the *debatante* we had observed to weep in the beginning, would have been forgotten in the *melée*; but on her mamma making a sign to the mistress of the house, that lady came to seek her. She would have resisted; but one pulling her forward, and the other pushing her behind, she was compelled to advance, and was led to the piano-forte as a certain Lord Chancellor left the woollack.

While she yet seemed with difficulty to support herself, we whispered in her ear, "fear nothing—they shall not hear you—we will contrive a conversation—make them laugh; or even break some of the furniture, if necessary; during which you may sing at your ease without being noticed."

The interest we showed had some effect in distracting her thought from herself, and she thanked us with a grateful smile. We commenced at once the fulfilment of our promise; talked loud as having something capital to relate; and while a circle collected round us, our protégée began her unpretending ballad. There were not wanting some to say, "but hark—the song!" Still we went on, until the last verse, when we observed the voice to have increased in firmness. Her fear had passed away, and we decided that she might be listened to. In faith that last verse was sung prettily and to an attentive audience. The little dear had the colour, at her finish, of a peony; for she perceived that they had heard her; but the applause was general, and she returned to the side of her mamma, lovely from her new enjoyment.

Then followed the duettes, and then a buffa song from a wholesale tallow chandler, whose spouse had vaunted his ventriloquial ability; but already a retreat had been sounded, and while the tallow chandler was convulsing with merriment his wife, his son, and his sister, who had grouped themselves around him; the assembly took their leave, promising to return at the next concert.

What conclusion must we come to? That music, executed by amateurs, is only gratifying to the performers; and that in a *Soirée Musicale*, nothing is heard with so much pleasure as a country dance, a waltz, or a polka.

H. C. M.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CONNOISSEUR.

SIR,

I cannot let the "Trunk Maker" have it all to himself; for though he has unhappily made it quite clear that the drama is in a declining state, and has likewise pointed out most evidently all and every cause of its decline still he has stopped there,—he has not attempted a rescue, or even shown a way for others to lend a hand. This is no easy task, but still I must say my say; and if I can only provoke the Trunk Maker to continue his advocacy of the histrionic art, I shall at any rate "have done the state some service." Bear in mind, I agree with the Trunk Maker almost in toto, and consequently, what I say shall be founded upon what he has said. The first part of his first paper applies more to dramatic authors, with whom I have nothing to do; I merely wish to prop the stage, and I therefore come at once to the following string of questions, to be found in the paper alluded to, in the 6th number of the Connoisseur.

"Were not the two Kembles, Kean, Young, Macready, and Elliston, at one time before the public? and is not Macready the sole remnant left? not one to fill the place of all the rest. Have we had an equal to Miss O'Neil since that gifted actress left the stage? Is not Miss Cushman the nearest approach to excellence for twenty-five years, and is not she an American? Why is this? Has dramatic talent burnt itself out? Has civilization passed it by?"

To these questions, immediately the answer, and a clever but unfortunately difficult remedy is affixed.

"We believe the most immediate cause to be, that there is no *school* in the provinces for actors, that there is no existing opportunity for male or female aspirants to prepare themselves for an appearance on the Metropolitan boards in the higher walks of either tragedy or comedy." Now here, by the bye, I do not agree quite "in toto" with the Trunk Maker. Why, "schools in the provinces?" Why not a Royal Academy in Hanover Square? Surely a Royal Academy for the national drama, would be as worthy of patronage as the existing one of music. Highly deserving as that is of all the support it gains, I do not see why it should monopolize all, and why the higher walks in the drama should only be trodden by feet that are drilled in the provinces. Would that some royal personage would follow the example of the founder of the Hanover Square Institution, and depend upon it, there would be no lack of noble and wealthy supporters, and one colossal prop to the drama would at once be obtained. But this would not do all—nay, but little without further aid. There are already numberless teachers of elocution, some very first-rate men, who are ready and able to prepare male and female aspirants for an appearance on the Metropolitan boards in the higher walks of either tragedy or comedy, and depend upon it a public institution would not be patronized by the *right sort of aspirants* (mark that) if these private instructors are disregarded. To a patient, a physician might say—really I know of a remedy for your disorder, but it is so extremely difficult to procure it, that I fear you must perish for the want of it. In such a predicament is the drama, with the Trunk Maker's promise of support from a school in the provinces, or any academy in town. Let us look at another class of patients,—those for whom there is a remedy, but who are not the right subjects to undergo it; such are they who unfortunately seek it, *they are not the right sort of aspirants*.

The fact is, the higher walks of the drama, are by no means easy to perambulate, and none but gentlemen—by which I mean men of *education* and *refinement*—should presume to set their feet upon them. The stage is looked upon in the present day, merely as a *trade*, not as a profession, and actors have recourse to it more for what they can get by it, than what they can bestow upon it; they care not about "being seen no more," as long as they can manage for a sufficient remuneration to "strut and fret their hour." They care little for applause, or at any rate for posthumous reputation, as long as they can fill their pockets, and therefore, with few exceptions, take little pains to improve. They are mostly at the mercy of the manager for the part they enact, and consequently are often *compelled* to make egregious asses of themselves, a thing sufficient in itself to give them a disgust for their calling, and make them utterly careless about the decline of the drama in any but a mere pecuniary point of view.

We laugh at a comedian in Othello Travestie, simply because the language being rendered suitable to the buffoon, there is nothing to shock our senses, we are prepared for the ridiculous, and acknowledge the receipt of it by a hearty laugh; children can share this pleasure with us, and heaven forbid that they should be deprived of their amusements. But such scenes as these can never raise the drama—nay, they cannot support it; nay, beyond all doubt, they hasten its decline; but when we see a pitiable object "splitting the ears of the groundling" with the magnificent *passions* of our immortal Shakspeare, although infinitely more ridiculous than any Travestie, we can laugh no longer—disapprobation marks our disgust—and we frequent the theatre no more; hence, if not the prime cause, a principal one, of the downfall of theatricals. Managers should never attempt what they cannot do well, and never forget that it is no use having a good Macbeth, if the rest of the company is not sufficient to fill up decently at least the rest of the parts.

Pecuniary reward is of course indispensable, but until men can be found who consider it second to applause, the Shakespearian drama at any rate, can never hold up its head. The actor of Othello and Hamlet should be able to instruct the audience in the characters—they should look to him for the true reading; and how in the name of wonder is an uneducated, unpolished, and inelegant man to achieve this. O! there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the *accent* of christians, nor the *gait* of a christian, pagan, or man, have so *strutted* and *bellowed*, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they *imitated humanity* so abominably. Gentlemen must support the drama in person, as well as purse, or tragedy and comedy must sink into farce and burlesque. And why do not gentlemen come forward? Did they never? Do not some—alas! how few,—still struggle for its support? Was not Mr. Young a gentleman? (I speak of him as dead to the stage.) Was not David Garrick a gentleman? Was not Edmund Kean a gentleman? Were not the Kembles one and all gentlemen? I will not mention the many ladies that have done honour to the stage, and to themselves by their support of it; and I will refrain, for many reasons, from a list of the "is not's;" why, then, do not gentlemen come forward now? The truth will out, it is "*infra dig.*"—their places are usurped by men with whom they cannot associate (albeit, "jolly companions every one,") and they are com-

pelled—many, be assured, with heavy hearts—to withhold their support, although, at the same time, they full well know that by so doing, they reluctantly hasten the decline of the drama.

Of course, it will easily be seen in what sense I use the somewhat obscure term "Gentleman." I do not for an instant intend to aim a shaft at the respectability of the stage, although I have heard some of the most respectable members of the profession speak in no measured terms of that. It is not men of high birth that I mean, or that are wanted—it is not men of great family that I mean, or that are wanted. It is not Grosvenor Square that I am canvassing,—High Holborn will do as well,—but it is men who can read, and understand what they read; it is men who can take their hats off to a lady without dropping them, or eat soup without sneezing in it; men, in short, as I have said before, of refinement and education, and then, depend upon it, however low their birth, should they but succeed, their profession of an actor will speedily raise them—aye, into the society of the highest in the land.

I do not mean by what I have stated, to say that every well-educated man must necessarily be able to act; far from it, here comes the use of the "School in the Provinces," or the London academy; though, as I said before, several professionals are to be found who are able, and I trust, honest enough to give a just opinion of the probable success of the aspirant who may seek their aid, and to encourage them to proceed, or warn them to desist.

There is yet another point, however, that is absolutely necessary, after the "school" is founded, and the right sort of pupils found, and that is, that when they are launched in their profession, they should pull together. If every good actor must take the first character, what hope is there for the entire play. Let them all do their utmost for the complete success, and remember great credit is due to him who makes a second-rate part conspicuous. Charles Kemble's Mercutio was the talk of the town, when the personator of Romeo was not named. Stars, however brilliantly they shine in the provinces, must be hid in London, or, at least, must be content to be subdued, by permitting the nearer approach of other luminaries. Why should not Messrs. Macready, Phelps, Vandenhoff, Wallack, Anderson, &c. &c., take one of the large houses together, share the success, and each and all do their utmost to promote it? While so much jealousy exists, and actors are not content with their just portion of the applause, but must even have the whole—aye, and faith, nearly the whole of the profits too, the drama must be a ruinous speculation to managers, and a heartless profession to second-rates. Oh! that I were rich enough to back my opinions, and purchase attention to these remarks, I should be content to risk a large sum to uphold the legitimate drama; and I do think any one so disposed might, to some extent, succeed. What one man cannot perform, let a body attempt. It will be no mean feather in the cap of any nobleman whose name may head the list.

E. G. W.

NOTE.—(School in the Provinces). It has been suggested to me, that the Trunk Maker does not mean literally a place for dramatic tuition, as I have interpreted it, but merely, as it were, a training ground, or place of public rehearsal in the country, to fit the aspirant to make a favourable debut in the Metropolis. If this be his meaning, he is doubtless in error. Liverpool, Bristol, Bath, Edinburgh, Dublin, the nurseries of former great tragedians, still exist and flourish. No; it is a bona-fide school that is wanted, with proper aspirants; and I trust I have not misconstrued the Trunk Makers meaning; should I however, have done so, I again unhesitatingly affirm that he is mistaken, and my after assertion, "that the right sort of aspirant is wanting" is much strengthened.

MUSICAL CRITICISM.

There is an opinion very prevalent among the community at large, that music and musicians should in a great degree be exempt from the severity of criticism, the utmost that ought to be said it appears should be confined on the one side to some common-place observations, carefully culled so as not to wound the vanity and sensitiveness of the genus irritabile, whereas, on the other side, the most fulsome panegyric, *decies repitita*, and at length so attenuated as to become unmeaning—may be lavishly applied according to the caprice, or absurdity of the writer. This opinion would seem to be founded on some notion that music and musicians are only employed in ministering to the amusement of mankind, and that if any one should not come up to a certain standard while thus doing his utmost to please, he should be rather treated with the milk and water of human kindness, than with the full proof spirit of criticism; how far this may operate as an excuse for leniency it is not now our purpose to discuss, because, we feel assured that musicians themselves would be the first to deprecate this standard of the art. They forsooth would raise it on a pinnacle high above all other arts, and we argue, therefore, that if music is thus attempted to be elevated by its own professors; it thereby lays itself open to be treated with reference to its execution, in the same way as a painting, a statue, or building may do.

The style adopted by those who in this matter would lead public opinion, varies almost indefinitely—here one attempting a certain smartness, shows only his ignorance and ill-nature; another lisps out his lay "in liquid lines mellifuously bland;" a third, a *laudator temporis acti* sees nothing good in these degenerate days, and talks twaddle with a score of Handel's before him; this one has a tedescan tendency, and says what he thinks, heaven bless his honesty, but it is more than probable that he never thinks what he says, or in what he does say, that thought has nothing to do in the matter; and our very dear friend is so learnedly abstruse, or abstrusely learned, that he knows whence every bar is taken, woe! to the unlucky Plagiarist—from a Gresham professor upwards:—

"He is a man of worthy parts,
Well skilled in music and the arts,
In every branch can be reporter,
And slakes his thirst in pots of porter."

But there is one an oracle in his way, who would be thought to have great influence, and boldly thrusts himself forward on all occasions. Let us imagine his career ere he thus endeavoured to wield the critic pen: first, when a pupil he has some vague notions of distinction, after conquering the *pons assinorum*, running over all the species of counterpoint, floundering through canons, fugues, strict, florid, imitations, &c., he forthwith gets a piece of new music paper, writes his title, and then slaps his forehead for an idea, it may or it may not come, we will suppose it does—the thing is begun and ended, and lo! this prodigy is published. He has now achieved something, and this constitutes him a judge; he then runs full tilt against all and sundry the modern Italian school, eschews Bellini and Donizetti, treats Mercadanti and Verdi with contempt, and becomes enamoured of all manner of abstrusities. All possible discords throw him into extacies. He thanks his stars he despises the modern Italian rubbish. He writes a letter to prove A flat and G sharp are not the same, and then is installed *arbiter elegantiarum* of the musical world, his would-be profundity being only surpassed by his actual prejudice, a *prima facie* evidence

of his incapability of criticism; his first essay in this department is astonishingly erudite—he reviews a piece of music, he thunders forth his dictum that some modulation is harsh, and upon this discovery utters his condemnation. Now what would be said if any one writing a criticism on a picture should pronounce with oracular wisdom that in one unlucky corner the transition from red to bottle green was harsh. *Quid rides?* Laugh you may, but which is the most absurd?

..... Nunc aliquis dicat mihi, quid tu?
Nullane habes vitia? imo alia et fortasse minora.

Verily we claim no exemption from the common lot of mortals, we set up for no infallible judgment, we only aim at truth. To find fault is within every one's power, but to criticise requires a combination of qualities rarely met with in the same individual; and there seem to be so many misapprehensions on the subject, one advancing one opinion, another something diametrically opposite that in such contentions and disagreements of doctors it may appear difficult to decide. But can that be called criticism which advocates but one set of opinions? Can that be called criticism, which would condemn a whole school of writers? Can that be called criticism which would claim some intuitive insight for itself alone? No, let whatever be said contain some proof of its soundness, and let nothing be said but what may admit of proof, and then we may arrive at some near approach to truth, which should be the aim of all criticism. There are some remarks on this subject, which although written by one of another country, are still so apposite and applicable to the state of things in this country that we shall offer no apology for inserting here some extracts from the writings of Mons. Fetis, whose name alone will be their guarantee.

"The artists and the learned in music are no more exempt from prepossessions and prejudices than the ignorant, only they are of another kind. It is but too common to hear musicians maintain seriously that they alone have the right not only to judge of music, but also to receive pleasure from it. Strange blindness! which makes one believe he does honour to his art by limiting its power. What indeed would music be if it was only a mysterious language, which we could not understand, until we had been initiated into its hieroglyphic signs? It would hardly deserve to be studied. It is because music acts almost universally and in various ways, though always vaguely, that this art is the worthy occupation of the life of a happily constituted artist. If it were limited to interesting only a small number of persons, what would be the recompense of its studies and its labours? It is one thing to feel, and another to judge: to feel is common to the whole human race—to judge, is the province of the skilful. But the latter must not persuade themselves that their judgments are without fault; wounded self-love, opposing interests, enmities, national prejudices, and those of education are causes which often mislead."

"There is a class which may be called the class of professional critics: it is ordinarily men of the quill who undertake this employment, though they are no more fit for it, than any other persons whose senses have been improved by the habit of hearing or seeing. By the air of assurance with which they daily and weekly throw out their musical theories in the papers, one would take them for experienced artists, if their multiplied blunders did not every moment show their ignorance of the end, means, and processes of the art. What is somewhat pleasant is, that their opinions have been com-

pletely changed within a few years, and yet their language is as haughty as if they held an invariable doctrine."

"To speak of what one is ignorant of is a mania which affects the whole world, because no one is willing to appear ignorant of anything. This is seen in politics, in literature, in the sciences, and especially in the fine arts. In the ordinary conversation of society, the follies which are uttered on these subjects do no great harm, but the newspapers have acquired so much influence, that the blunders they contain are not without danger—they give so much the more of a wrong direction to opinion, as the majority of the idle believe them blindly, and as they circulate every where." With this we will conclude, for were we to utter one word as from ourselves on this point, it might tend to weaken the position we have taken in thus putting forth observations emanating from one who may be considered an authority in these matters.

C. J.

"LE MALADE IMAGINAIRE," AVEC "LA CEREMONIE."

SUCH is the tempting bait with which the *affiche* of the *Théâtre Français* invariably strives to allure the ever eager, ever insatiable crowd of Parisian playgoers within the classic atmosphere of its wide arena, upon the anniversary* of the birth of the greatest of comic dramatists, Molière; and whilst the racy, but somewhat indelicate comedy often serves as an afterpiece to some of the more refined compositions of its talented author, or to some one or other of the classical tragedies of the *repertoire*, the *cérémonie* is only affixed upon certain days of popular relaxation and holiday making, and thus does this great *solemnité théâtrale* rarely occur more than three times a year, including the birthday.

The *dimanche gras*, or last Sunday of the carnival is usually one of the days selected for the pageant, as was the case last winter, when the writer of the present article assisted at its celebration.

The prominent character in the piece, that of the *Malade* was played by Provost, with the *verve*, liveliness and intelligence which render him so great a favorite in parts of this description; the Thomas Diafoirus, of Samson, was as replete with whim and *niaiserie* as the severest critic could desire; whilst the *reine des soubrettes*, the queen of all the waiting-maids of Molière; the pert, the ready-witted, the *ruseé* Toinette was enacted with great vivacity and truth, by Made-moiselle Brohan.

The Purgou of Riché was also a correct performance, and indeed the whole cast of the play left little to desire.

But to the *cérémonie*! shortly after the curtain has fallen upon the last scene of the comedy, it again rises and discovers les *Præses* generally sustained with great drollery by Regnier, in a high pulpit in the middle of the stage, and then every actor and actress in the company enter, two and two, in solemn silence, and wearing physicians' robes of scarlet cloth; after saluting the audience, they gravely take their places upon raised seats extending across the wings down to the foot lights.

The procession, which necessarily occupies a considerable time in entering, is marshalled in by a whole legion of *apothicaires*, clothed in tight suits of black, with white linen aprons on, and shouldering *seringues* in lieu of muskets.

Last of all comes the *Malade* himself, surrounded by a numerous staff, consisting of all the performers in the comedy and an extra number of the above-mentioned body guards,

* Molière was born the 15th January, 1622.

and after he has taken his place at a small desk immediately under the pulpit, the degree of Doctor of Medicine is conferred upon him, and a long discourse pronounced in burlesque latin, by les Præses. Complimentary speeches are also made in the same lingo by one or two of the doctors present, and the ceremony terminates amid general acclamations.

It is really a curious as well as interesting spectacle to the lover of the drama to see every member of this, the first establishment in the world for the cultivation of the historic art, assembled to render homage to the memory of one of the choicest spirits that ever existed; tragedy as well as comedy concur in the proceedings; the majestic Rachel side by side with the graceful Plessy, the rigid Melingue with the lively Anais, the pathetic Volnys with the *Spirituelle* Mante or *distinguée* Denain; and the men! Ligier "cheek by jowl" with Samson, Beauvallet with Riché, Guyon with Mirecour, not one of the troop is ever missing, extremes meet and contrasts are amalgamated. C. M.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC KING'S SCHOLARSHIPS.

In our last number we gave an announcement of these Scholarships, and also extracted from the circulars some account of their origin. The examination took place on the 19th, before the board of professors, seven in number—Mr. Cipriani Potter the Principal, Sir George Smart, Sir Henry Bishop, Mr. Elliott, Mr. Goss, Mr. Lucas, Mr. Sterndale Bennett. There were twenty-one candidates for this honour—fifteen young gentlemen, and six young ladies; the result was, in the selection of Mr. Henry Hill, a violinist, a pupil of the Academy, and studying the instrument under the direction of Mons. Sainton, one of the professors; and the young lady selected was Miss Mary Eliza Smith a piano-forte player, who was not brought up at the Institution. Of the unsuccessful candidates several distinguished themselves very creditably, so much so, as to be favourably reported of by the board of examiners.

It shall always be our endeavour to give what publicity we can to the proceedings of this Institution, for we consider it deserving of every patronage. There seems to be abroad some feeling unfavourable to it, more especially emanating from old members of the profession, and also from those who have not received their musical education there. That the old members should feel a little sore upon the subject, is not to be wondered at, for the superior knowledge of the pupils in the theory and practice of the art, throws completely into the shade the musical acquirements of former days; and those who do not belong to the Institution, must necessarily feel a jealousy at the exclusion from some of the advantages which the students enjoy, but fortunately, the interests of this Institution are not likely to be much affected by either class of the disaffected.

The Royal Academy of Music owes its origin, we believe, principally to the exertions of the present Lord Westmoreland, assisted by other noblemen and gentlemen well-disposed towards the musical art. The first meetings for its formation were held in the year 1822, but the Academy was not opened until March, 1823. At first the pupils were received and educated entirely gratuitously, but this was soon found impossible to be continued; and, in order to prevent its total dissolution, their parents and guardians were informed that, unless they did come forward, the doors must be closed; the professors also most generously

offered their gratuitous services for three months, in order to re-establish the tottering state of affairs. This event occurred about the year 1826; with this arrangement a change for the better took place, and since that time the resources of the Institution have been gradually improving, until now there is some little accumulation of capital, and we hope sincerely that every thing rests on a sure foundation.

There are many people who take it into their heads to cavil, and say that no good has been done, because no great star has arisen to take the world captive by its brilliancy. An inference has been attempted to be drawn, that because no great display has been made, that the object has not been gained, which was principally to advance native musical talent. This is a very unfair way of judging, for talent of any description cannot be brought out by any system whatever. It is sufficient, and the object is gained, if an improvement has taken place in the general average of musical knowledge; and that this has been the case since the establishment of the Royal Academy, there can be no doubt in the mind of any unprejudiced person; and besides it has given an immense impulse to the general progress of music throughout the country. We cannot say that, as regards a first rank of talent in the musical profession, that there are more in it now than formerly, for such is not the case; but the number of those who are well instructed in the principles of the art is infinitely greater, and consequently there has been a more general diffusion of musical taste. How many who have received their education in this Institution, are now dispersed throughout the country, settling down even in remote corners, and a good musical tuition may be gained at a moderate rate in places where formerly the sweet sounds were seldom or never heard. The study of harmony, too, the grammar of music, which is imperative, makes all the students acquainted with the theory as well as the practice of music, and, consequently, they are more fitted for the general purposes of the profession than those artists of former days, whose education rarely extended beyond the practical part. The improved state of our orchestras is a well-known fact, for which circumstance the public are much indebted to this Institution, for the orchestral practice which all the male students are obliged to undergo, fits them at once for any situation where their services may be required; and one of the main points, is, not only the pupils themselves taught the rudiments of the art, but when sufficiently advanced, and as a reward for their exertions, they are elevated to the rank of sub-professors, and in this capacity are enabled to gain an insight into the difficult duties of teaching; they are thus rendered better masters than can be expected to be the case where the education has been picked up in a desultory manner.

His late Majesty king George the IVth. took a great interest in the welfare of this establishment, and we believe it was through his sanction that it was called the Royal Academy, and also that a Charter of Incorporation was granted. But it still labours under a disadvantage from which the Conservatoires abroad are happily saved, namely—there is no public provision to support it. It owes its continuance principally to the kind feelings of the community interested in the art, and to the payments of the pupils, all deficiencies being made good out of the proceeds of an annual grand fancy dress ball. Now we are far from saying that Terpsichore should not come forward to aid her sister Muse, but what we would urge, is, that where this necessity exists of eking out its funds it is unfair ever to institute any com-

parison between the doings of an establishment thus upheld with those of the Continent, supported as they are by extensive government grants and royal patronage, a favour but nominally conferred on our Academy; for, except on one occasion when some music was performed, the composition of His Royal Highness Prince Albert, and report speaks strange of this concoction. We do not remember to have ever seen royalty patronize the concerts, given by the pupils. We say it is unfair to make a comparison—the only wonder is, that it has been able to keep up its position at all, being thus coldly neglected when it ought to be cherished and fostered by the patronage not only of the court but by those who pretend to feel an interest in the musical art.

We can conceive the derision with which any proposition for an annual grant to the Royal Academy of Music would be received by the House of Commons even for the miserable pittance of a few hundreds.—The mouths of Messrs Wakley and Hume, wide open, would pour forth a torrent of abuse against such a perversion of the public funds; and yet we might question whether in its way as much good might not be done by such an application, as any other that may be propounded with ever so plausible an appearance; for it ought to be remembered that the great body of the musical profession is taken from what is called the middle ranks of life—a class, upon whose welfare and well-being the permanent prosperity of the country much depends, and a little—ever so little spared from the pampered favorites of the pension list, would give the means to many to earn for themselves a decent and respectable livelihood, and in a situation which, be it also remarked, places the members of the middle rank in a position to associate with the classes above them, and thus forms a connecting link naturally tending to engender kindly feelings between different ranks in life, which, in a constitution like ours may even be the cause of permanent national security. But we do not intend to inflict a political disquisition on our readers, although this digression which has come so naturally, will show that even the cultivation of the musical art may have its uses even in a political point of view.

DECORATIVE ART SOCIETY.

A Meeting of this Society took place Dec. the 10th., Mr. Fildes in the chair. A paper "On CHROMATIC DECORATIONS IN ENGLAND," was read by Mr. E. Cooper. He commenced by noticing the progressive regard for coloured decorations exhibited during the Norman and Gothic epochs; alluding to the simple and chaste effect produced by the polished Purbeck marble shafts at Ely, the Temple Church, &c., the rich grandeur of the earlier stained glass windows at York and elsewhere, with the attendant painted decorations on ceilings and walls, and the pavements of encaustic tiles. He attempted to elucidate the principles which predominate in the better examples, by explaining the general application of the three primary colours and the more usual construction of the designs.

He then noticed the Stained Glass Windows at King's College Chapel, Cambridge, where the whole of the subjects and detail are designed with a feeling of renaissance, (it is supposed by Giulio Romano) he said, from personal observation, that nearly all the coloured glass is what is technically termed pot metal, and that where it is not so, as probably in the finest colours, it is enamelled glass, and he observed that drawing and shading were placed upon these, as is evident

from their disappearance in many cases, leaving the pot metal only. A dissonance was alluded to, arising from the colours of back ground and foreground, in pictorial subjects being of the same intensity, and a method of producing lights and distances by removing more or less from the thickness of the enamel, was suggested as applicable to windows, and a specimen was exhibited. Mr. Cooper then commented on the agreeable effect of stained glass windows where the walls are a simple or uniform colour, but urged careful consideration when the walls are decorated with pictures, he observed that the altar-piece by Raphael, at King's College Chapel, is entirely neutralized in effect by the overwhelming coloured rays of light entering in every direction upon it. The earlier examples of gothic windows were said to allow the transmission of a greater proportion of pure light. He maintained that the ancient coloured glass had no superiority over that now producible, and that the prevalent opinion of inferiority has arisen from the greater use of painted instead of pot metal or enamelled glass.

After some remarks on encaustic tiles (from specimens from Reading Abbey) and the peculiarities of Gothic drawing, colouring and sculpture. Mr. Cooper described some examples of transition or mixed Gothic and Italian character in the ceilings of the Chapel Royal, St. James's, and the Chapel of Bishop West in Ely Cathedral; also the fine specimen of baronial decorations lately restored at Hampton Court. He then took occasion to censure the manner in which some of the coloured decorations in the spandrels below the windows of the aisles in Westminster Abbey have been destroyed or concealed by misplaced and absurd mythological monumental tablets; and he noticed some fine and well-known examples of high tombs richly ornamented with marble colour and gilding. The decorations of the Elizabethan period were noticed, and a fine specimen of embossed, silvered, and coloured leather-hangings from the Manor House, Billinghurst, was exhibited.

The introduction of Italian architecture by Charles, led to the consideration of the ceiling of the Banqueting House, Whitehall, painted by Rubens; also of the works by Thornhill, Verrio, Langerre, and Charles de la Fosse, at Greenwich Hospital, St. Paul's, Chatsworth, and Montague House, (now British Museum.)

At present he remarked there appears to be a struggle for supremacy between the Gothic and Italian styles, and in his criticisms on some recent decorations expressed an opinion that the imitations have been unsuccessfully applied; instancing those in the Temple Church as partaking too freely of yellow ochreous tints; the Royal Exchange as being too petite and paltry for their purpose; the Conservative club as presenting a bewildering profusion of trifling ornament, devoid of any important character or design, and materially diminishing any grand effect that the architects might have contemplated.

After some remarks explanatory of his views on domestic decorations of the present day, Mr. Cooper submitted a question as to the applicability of Gothic decorations to modern purposes, with more especial reference to the new palace of Westminster. He admitted that decorations should be in accordance with the style, and subservient to the architectural character of the edifice; but he asked "must we therefore follow the earlier Gothic mannerisms? copy the attempts of an age of comparative barbarism in art? or are we to adopt all the improvements and knowledge of form of the present day." He contended that the Gothic did not admit of pictorial decoration in proper keep-

ing, and that the modern school of painting presented too many inconsistencies; and he then concluded by asserting that the Italian style of the 15th and 16th centuries, as found in the designs of Palladio, Scamozzi, Santovino, and others, admitted of the utmost degree of refinement, both in sculpture and painting, and afforded profitable materials for study for such a branch or purpose. A discussion followed (in which some leading artists took part), and it was observed that generally too much regard was had for precedent rather than principle, that decorative art was somewhat like to a well-laden ship adrift, that much grace and sweetness of expression may be found in Gothic art; but a stand should be made against Gothic barbarities—that Mr. Ballantine's recently published remarks on stained glass, contending that it is capable of converging high art were questionable, as applied to windows, which have a variety of essential purposes at variance with pictorial representations on walls, and moreover, never ought to attract or divide the attention with them,—that kaleidoscopic and byzantine arrangements of glass as at York were in better taste—that the richest designs would be found subordinate to colour, and that considerable analogy would be found between Persian carpets and Delhi shawls and the best arrangements of coloured decorations from the 11th to the 14th century.

The meeting adjourned to the 14th of January next.

THE NEW PHILHARMONIC CONDUCTOR.

So then the Philharmonic Society has come to the satisfactory conclusion that not one individual member of their own lot is fit to undertake the important post of Conductor; this indeed was virtually acknowledged a year or two ago, when the harmonious body apparently being unable to produce a common chord among themselves hired Dr. Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy to do the baton work for them—thinking no doubt that by calling in foreign assistance, jarring interests might be reconciled, unanimity restored, (if it ever existed,) and, in short, all discords which might have caused a suspension of good-feeling be resolved into soft and soothing harmony. But, somehow or other, it turned out on trial that the doctor did not suit the Philharmonic, or the Philharmonic the doctor, it is immaterial which; and the consequence was, he retired, and not in very good odour we believe, some little sharpness having been suffered to exist destructive to the perfect consonance. Sir H. Bishop was then called in to superintend, but soon showing his total incapacity for this office, he retired also, and made way for Mr. Moscheles, who was thought to be peculiarly qualified. He, however, only succeeded in worrying the poor unfortunate band out of all patience, and the upshot was, that at the conclusion of the season he retired, or was got rid of, we do not know which of the two it was. This great body, at least great in its own estimation, was then without a head—a lamentable fact—the tumescent corporation puffed-up with its own importance, had no head, not even a block on which to rest its flowing locks. In this dilemma Signor Costa, the well-known conductor of the Italian opera, has been applied to: last year we believe some little coquetting took place between the parties on this same subject, but Signor Costa, in the end, thought it convenient to shelter himself by saying, he could not get leave from the great opera potentate. However, a second application has seduced him from this

safe retreat, and he now has accepted the situation. In a former number of the work, we have given our opinion of him in this capacity at the Opera House, and as we still adhere to the same opinion, we can only refer our readers to what we have then and there stated in an article under the heading "The Conductor."

In former days it was the custom that each concert during the season should be conducted by a different person. A custom, no doubt, originating in the laudable desire that all who belonged to the society might have a finger in the pie; for it must be remarked, that those who were selected, or selected themselves, were for the most part, or altogether, piano players; and, therefore, had no opportunity of displaying themselves except with the baton in hand, which they wielded generally very much to their own satisfaction; though, as it has turned out, very little to the satisfaction of any one else. This state of things lasted as long as it could be endured, and when the point of endurance was past, the experiments we have mentioned above have been tried and failed; and as a dernier resort Signor Costa has been secured with the hope that his name would prove a support and prop against further decadence in public opinion. Now, since so many have failed in doing any good with this first-rate band, it surely would not be unreasonable to institute an inquiry as to the soundness of the individual members who compose it; and ascertain, or at all events make the endeavour to discover the cause of this total frustration of all attempts to conduct them, "a little leaven leavens the whole lump," and this may be the case here. Such a proceeding would, no doubt, be very unpalatable; but when the credit of the whole concern is at stake, when year after year old subscribers fall off with scarce a new accession, and there is consequently a decrease in the funds, so much so that within the last few years, the salaries of the performers have been considerably curtailed, a circumstance, which caused the secession of one of the ablest members of the orchestra; under such a combination of untoward events some radical reform should be attempted to hold out a prospect of reviving life. The fact is, there is something rotten in the rules and regulations that govern the body. And one cause, nay the principal cause of the present state of affairs may be found in the fact that the members of the orchestra, individually and collectively, are irresponsible. Once chosen, they are members for life; once installed in their office, from the first violin to the drum, they are no longer under controul. Nothing can displace them, except some very extreme proceeding which is never likely to be resorted to. The orchestra of the philharmonic is an independent body, they care nothing for directors, conductor, or any one else; the directors may deplore, bewail, remonstrate; the conductor may stamp, rave, turn his arm into an incessantly working pump handle. The audience may express disapprobation. What does the band care?

..... Populus me sibilat, at mihi plaudo
Ipse domi.....

Directors, conductor, and audience may all raise their voices, it is of no use, the orchestra hugs itself with the idea that it is the first band in Europe, they applaud themselves, happy in the estimate of their own importance. The pay of retribution has, however, arrived: the public, that once had to beg for admission, which was once considered even a favour, have by degrees withdrawn their

protecting patronage, and the consequent unfavourable state of the funds, makes some exertion necessary. The first trial was, as we have said, doing away with the absurdity of a separate conductor for each concert, and engaging Mendelsohn for the ungracious task of conducting, he failed; Sir H. Bishop and Mr. Moscheles have also tried to controul the unpromising material—they have failed; and Signor Costa is now solicited to make the attempt to bring the body into subjection. There is one chance of success he has, and which the others did not possess, viz.: that many members of the Philharmonic are under him as belonging to the opera band, there will, therefore, be some fear of offending one who has power to injure their individual interests in another quarter, and this no doubt must have a wholesome influence in restraining any undue exuberant independence, destructive as it must be to the working of the orchestra. But there is still one drawback—there is too much of the old leaven left, and until that is weeded out, the Philharmonic will never be what it ought to be, although it most complacently claims the title of "first rate."

We perhaps should not be doing justice to all parties if we did not mention another very probable cause of the falling off of the Philharmonic subscription list; namely the attraction of first-rate playing for a shilling admittance, any one fond of music may go and hear not only waltzes and polkas, but classical music as it is called, played in really first-rate style for one shilling. And very fine playing under Mons. Jullien, who is a really able conductor, may have proved to the English public that a concert at half a guinea with indifferent performance, although with the attractive name of the Philharmonic Society, is in fact a very dear bargain. We recommend it to the consideration of the direction whether some little diminution of the price of subscription would not be a beneficial movement, for it must be confessed that four guineas is a great deal to give for the series of eight concerts, at which year after year you hear the same things over and over again, with scarce a novelty introduced in musical composition. It may be true that the new compositions have not turned out altogether satisfactory, but still the public like novelty, and it is high time the Philharmonic should add something to its very stale list. It is very singular that no members of this body ever bring forward any new musical composition, or if they do, as with the case of a symphony last season, it turns out a failure. If they arrogate so much to themselves they should at least prove to the world that they can do something for the title they aim at. There are one or two of the members who have promised well, but we never hear of them now; let them bestir themselves, and endeavour to show that if not one of their body can conduct, at least some one may be found to produce a decent musical composition.

REVIEW.

Memorials of a Tour on the Continent; to which are added Miscellaneous Poems; by ROBERT SNOW, Esq.; Pickering, 311.

This work describes itself as composed of extracts from a journal kept during a perambulation through the beaten track of Englishmen in Southern Europe. It is, therefore, more a reminder of what we know than a pretender to novelty. It is not continuous, as a detailed route, but a selection of what the author thought most worthy, and has more the character

of a text-book, to be illustrated by prints or drawings, than of a complete work. Alternating with the prose, we have sonnets, ballads, and descriptions in blank verse and rhyme of various metres, stated to have been written in the vicinity of the places to which they have allusion; and though the sublime is never reached, nor the divine essence of poetry attained, there is a simplicity, truth, and happy phraseology in the descriptive portion, that will bear comparison with much that has a reputation for excellence. The work, being unconnected with bookselling interest, has no friends among reviewers; and, consequently, cannot calculate upon their notice. It is not quite within our province; yet, as both its prose and verse are occasionally devoted to artistic subjects, we scarcely break a rule in presenting it to the notice of our readers. In support of its pretension to descriptive accuracy, we select, almost at random, the following lines from among many others in the work equally appropriate:—

"Between Saulieu and Chalons on the Saone,
There is a place called Ivry, whence the road
Winds round a vine clad warm Burgundian slope,
Unto a waste upon a ridge of hills
Where summer rarely comes; and there we saw
The straight white road before us, and the wains
That toiled along it, far between and few,
To all appearance motionless; the last
Diminished in the distance to a speck.
On either side the ploughshare had wrought out
Deformed uncleanly furrows, timidly
Encroaching on the waste: low grey stone walls
Offered a scant protection: here and there,
Short stunted oak and hazel, thorn and briar,
Struggled with skeleton fragments of the rock,
Denuded, worn, storm-eaten: on the right,
Against the sky-line loomed a single tower,
Whereon a melancholy telegraph
Was set to wave its arms aloft in air,
Like signals of distress: it was a place
To which I could exile the misanthrope,
The hater of his kind, if such there be,
Until the snows, and rains, and frosts, and winds,
Should whip him from his folly: on the left,
One lone square mansion stood: disconsolate,
And tenantless it seemed; no touch, no breath
Of life reposed around it; sight nor sound
Was there of man, or beast, or bird, or tree."

One of the longest essays in the volume is headed "Observations on Imitation, and especially Sculpture; suggested by Works of Art at home and abroad." In it the author makes some attempts at a theory, accounting for the effects produced on the mind by the contemplation of works of art. We are always ready to receive these theories respectfully, when accompanied by exactitude of intimation. If even entirely groundless, their publication has its advantages, in showing that truth may not be sought in that direction. While endeavouring to discover the right path, every failure is a diminution of the probable amount of future error; and, as such, an approximation towards success.

We shall take an opportunity on a future occasion to go further into this subject than our disposable space in the present number will at present allow; closing this notice with the following extract, so happily representing the sentiments of the admirers of our great landscape painter:

ON THE PAINTINGS OF TURNER.

Great poet of the pencil. Thou wert born
With power to see into the soul of things;
And dowered with an intellectual scorn
Of slavish detail. For imaginings

Sublimed from Nature thanks are due to thee;
 By thy creations thou hast set us free
 To scale the heights of unattempted art.
 The tones that to the mind thou dost impart
 Are silent nerves. They respond by night
 In still pulsation to the slumbering light;
 Then vibrate to the colouring of the mist,
 When morning is instructing sky, and land,
 And ocean; and the breadth of gleaming sand
 Is glassing dream-like shores, with level day spring kissed.

H. C. M.

DRAMATIC SUMMARY.

FRENCH PLAY. ST. JAMES'S THEATRE.—The nightly influx of beauty and fashion, that assists at the performances in this theatre, is sufficient justification of managerial enterprize, for having commenced operations so early in the London season. The present company, we mean, of course, those forming its permanent portions, is less exceptionable in its inferior actors than we have sometimes had to remark; and a play is very fairly represented, even without the assistance of the star at the time in the ascendant. We may refer to Picard's comedy of *Le Petite Ville* as an example. The chief business has hitherto been intrusted to M. Lafont, an actor belonging to the large family of the Havebeens; and on which his claim to relationship is more obtrusive, from the class of character he represents often demanding an appearance of extreme youthfulness, which he has long ceased to possess. There is a story of a strong man of antiquity, who carried a calf on his shoulders every day, from its nativity till it became a bull of the largest dimensions, without inconvenience from its increased weight. A Parisian who has witnessed M. Lafont's personations for the last 30 years, may still so lend himself to the deceptions of the scene, as to believe that gentleman a sufficient representative of the *jeunes étourdis* at the present moment. We, however, have had no such training, and would at once invite M. Lafont to confine his future attentions to the character of old men; in which his acting of the Elder Matthias, in *Père et Fils* warrant pretensions to a high position. We have however another objection to M. Lafont on the English-French stage; his articulation is not distinct; he has a lisp and thickness of pronunciation, accompanied by a delivery generally rapid, that would prevent him from ever being popularly attractive on this side *La Manche*. The French theatre should be conducted with some attention to the fact, that notwithstanding the language is read and spoken almost universally, by even indifferently educated people in this country, the number who can follow, with facility, a voluble speaker at some distance from them, is comparatively few; and when thickness of pronunciation adds to their difficulties, the few become materially diminished. We are quite sure much of the popularity of M. Cartigny may be attributed to his style of declamation affording this facility to his audience; and his *entrées* are more distinctly noticed by applause than those of M. Lafont, in spite of the different size of the type, in which their respective names are announced in the play bill. M. Lemadre is another actor whose pronunciation is eminent for these advantages. Mdle. Eugénie St. Marc, a charming young actress scarcely yet arrived at full appreciation of her own powers, is the other star for the time being. We would advise the genteel comedy mongers of the Haymarket to take some lessons from her in lady-like bearing; the audience who frequent that theatre could not possibly lose by the experiment. We must not omit to notice another young actress Mdle. Heloise, as

giving earnest of dramatic talent, if allowed fitting opportunity, inferior to no other in the company.

The ventilation, comfort, and brilliant appearance of this theatre is a reproach to every other manager.

LYCEUM THEATRE.—The Keeleys have pierced the clouds of heavy dulness with which our self-styled regular drama has oppressed the playgoer (heaven defend us from any more such regular dramas,) by a stream of brilliancy reflected from one of the loveable creations of the immortal Dickens. The Cricket on the Hearth, unlike so many previous attempts to dramatize the productions of the leading story-teller of our period, from being dealt with by something of a kindred spirit (Mr. Albert Smith,) retains sufficient connection in its story to interest as a plot without sacrifice of that original individuality of character, in which, as well as in the exquisitely infused essence of ideal moral beauty, his personages are so distinguished. The botching, hasty manner in which Boz had been previously dramatized ill prepared us for expecting the satisfaction we received on this occasion. Mrs. Peerybingle's description of her happiness with her elderly husband, though true to the original story was something beside the natural, and the position she took during his repast was far more picturesque than appropriate; but these specks of discontent gradually gave way before the accumulating excellence of the acting as the piece proceeded; and though we could not help accusing Dot of insufficiency of motive in her husband's clumsiness, the acting of Mrs. Keeley evidenced so satisfactorily that she thought herself right, we decline contesting the matter. Miss Mary Keeley, the interesting daughter of the manageress, made her first appearance on any stage, (a privilege, on a London Theatre, become the patent right of the children of actors,) and filled the part allotted to her, the blind daughter of Caleb Plummer, with infinite truth and feeling. Keeley in the old Toy Maker, Emery as the Carrier, and even Meadows, an actor difficult to fit in any part, were true and natural to perfectness. F. Vining looked the old man at one moment, and topped the juvenile the next, as if he had been in the mill to be ground young again. Miss Turner's Slowboy was a triumph of art, but we think a little over made up. We do not object to a trifle of dirt, but—well—we wont go into details; for when we own to laughing and crying, clapping our hands till their palms presented symptoms of inflammation, and calling (a thing we abhor,) the whole *dramatis persone* before the curtain, all our critical bile must be supposed to have evaporated.

We did hope the burlesque mania had worn itself out, but the monstre placard of this, among several other theatres, have repudiated our aspirations; and we must be patient some time longer under their infliction. We cannot, however, comfortably witness an artist like Mrs. Keeley tom-noddyfying herself in one of these spooney exhibitions. It is a species of mental prostitution, in which the higher the class of talent that may be sacrificed, the greater the rejoicing of the mob for whose satisfaction the degradation has been consented to.

ADELPHI.—The Lioness of the North, honestly advertized as an adaptation from the French, by Charles Selby, with considerable alterations and additions. The greater portions of which additions being the intrusion of Mr. Wright into a nice little plot, to which he is a hinderance and a stumbling block: but we take for granted a drama, in which Mr. Wright's name was not, would find no favour with an Adelphi audience. The piece was well acted by Mr. Webster as a volatile young cavalry officer; Mr. Lambert as a good-natured governor of a fortress; and Mr. Selby as a jealous old minister of police;

but its chief recommendation is the scope given to Madame Celeste for the peculiar electric effects she is so sufficient in producing. The unfettered temperament of the female autocrate, at one moment raging with the wildness of some uncontrollable convulsion of nature, and then, at once, subsiding to gentleness, and even sportive vivacity, was so happy a personification of the actress, as to make, of itself, sufficient warrant for the adaptation. We however, protest against the judgment of mingling the buffoonery of Mr. Wright with the serious business of the drama. Indeed, the audience gave that gentleman some unmistakeable hints of their opinion on the subject.

HAYMARKET THEATRE.—The absence of interest in the dramatic business of this theatre since our last, renders a summary of its novelties exceedingly simple. The Miseries of Human Life, and Railway Bubbles, (the first marked by an abortive attempt of Mr. Tilbury to look good-natured, and the second by the uncertainty of Mr. Hudson, whether he was to personate an Irish gentleman in the disguise of a scavenger, or an Irish scavenger in the disguise of a gentleman;) have with that wretched attempt at comedy, The Maiden Aunt, sufficed to gratify the ever renewing railway audiences, whose standard for judging, being of provincial getting up, look upon an actor with a clean collar and presentable gloves, that goes through a part without *sticking*, as something very much beyond the common. The discontented growl of the old London playgoer is negated by the smiling comfortableness of agricultural or manufacturing simplicity; and if he disturbs their enjoyment by attempt at sibilator, they dub him an atrocity, and propose to turn him out. The manager, standing with his hands in his pockets, and counting his half-pence with chuckling content, thinks this will last for ever; goes on, reducing the amount of talent in his company, and increasing the amount of receipts in his treasury, the result of all this is, theatrical property goes up, and an increase in the number of theatres becomes a matter of course.

Mr. Buckstone, the popular comedian and dramatic writer, has taken the field as originator of a company of proprietors; and the vacant space on the east side of Leicester Square, formerly occupied by Jaunay's hotel, is fixed upon as the site of the intended building. As a matter of mere investment, carefully conducted, we believe the speculation safe. The ease with which the provincial population now visit the metropolis, has, already a marked effect on the receipts of the theatres, and every additional locomotive facility, from the opening of new lines of railways, or the reduction of prices in the old ones, must go on increasing the advantages of the metropolitan manager. As a speculation we believe it good; but as an advantage to the drama, or affording hope of better days or nights to the London playgoer, we believe it to be a move in the wrong direction. It would be nothing more than an arena for the exhibition of Mr. Buckstone, and we suppose, Mrs. Fitzwilliam, in which, as at the Lyceum and Sadlers' Wells, all the other actors must be subservient accessories, as turnips to a leg of mutton, or the unobtrusive back ground, that gives effect to the principle figures in a picture. It will become another fortification, impregnable to provincial talent, into which only mediocrity without ambition may hope to be admitted.

We would propose to the admirers of the British drama (of whom we yet hope there is a sufficient number existing among the wealthy, to rescue it from present degradation) the establishment of a theatre upon a more satisfactory system:—upon a system that should afford opportunity for assaying the amount of power possessed in the country; and collecting that power

in such manner that a play may be again acted as some of us have seen it, in which the control should be wrested from the grasp of those whose immediate interest is to misdirect it. We do not believe the regular drama can ever be efficient under the entire management of an actor. Mrs. Siddons was kept from the London public for seven years by the jealousy of Garrick, and every obstacle to the engagement of Kean at Drury Lane, was furnished by the aristocracy of the green room; the manager of the time was not himself an actor, or we might never have seen the only male Tragic genius of his time. Again, we despair of a theatre conducted on principles of private pecuniary investment, with a public so little exigent of effort as the present, ever placing the drama in a higher position than it holds, the toleration of the Maiden Aunt sufficiently replies to any doubt on the subject.

We would propose that a sum be raised in shares, subject to an interest of 5 per cent., unconnected with free admissions; that there be no free admissions whatever, the public press excepted; that a certain number of the proprietors be elected each year as directors, without salary, who shall appoint a manager at sufficient remuneration, to conduct the general affairs of the theatre, who shall be empowered to make engagements for the current season, subject to the approval of the directors for any longer period.

That boxes, or free admissions, shall not be sold for a period beyond the current season, but the receipts of each year be held responsible for its expenses.

That a sufficient stipulated sum shall be agreed upon for the expense of each season previous to its commencement, beyond which the manager may not go; and which amount may only be drawn from the treasury by voucher, furnished by the parties with or through whom the expenditure has been incurred.

That all profits beyond such agreed expense and the 5 per cent. on capital, shall be divided into three parts; one-third to be set apart for repairs and re-decoration, or other extraordinary disbursements; another third to be added to the previously estimated expense of the following season, as a bonus to the frequenters of the theatre in increased attraction, and the remaining third as additional interest on capital to be paid to the proprietors.

On these principles a theatre may be carried on with permanent advantage to the public, to the drama, and to the proprietors. The public would have an interest in a theatre whose success gave them some share in its advantages; while public profit could only be co-existent with increase of value to the capital employed. An opportunity for making long engagements would be an incentive towards the discovery of fresh talent, and professional jealousy would no longer be an insurmountable barrier against its production. There is more, much more, to be said on this subject than our present limits will afford; but we shall recur again to the topic, and point out very many more recommendations that it may be proved to combine with those we have presented.—THE TRUNK MAKER.

MUSICAL SUMMARY.

DRURY LANE.—This theatre has received very fortunate assistance from the success of the opera *Maritana*. We have spoken of this production in our last number, and have nothing to add or take from the opinion then given; the music is no doubt of a pleasing character—it runs on smoothly, creating little or no sensation during its progress; and at its close is generally received with no great amount of approbation from

the audience. It has certainly lasted longer, probably, than even the manager himself expected; the house has been well filled, but whether with paper or metallic currency, we cannot say: perhaps a judicious admixture of both. At all events we suppose something of this success must be put to the circumstance that the theatre at this time has the opera department all to itself, and *faute de mieux* people will go to hear pleasing music rather than none at all. If Mr. Wallace should be tempted, from the patronage he has received, to write another opera, we strongly advise him to exercise more judgment in the selection of the libretto; for the story of Don Caesar has been adapted in a way that has well nigh perilled the fate of the music. Another fault—and not a little one—is the interminable length—full three hours, in representation; an amount of infliction rarely ventured on, even at the Italian Opera, with its host of musical talent to support a performance. Of the singers, Miss Poole is the only one that is really deserving of the name. We sympathize with Mr. Harrison, although his very best efforts always require a certain allowance to be made for their not coming up to the standard they ought. The Ballet, however, we conceive to be the great attraction, and for a very simple reason: any one can understand dancing, who perhaps may not have a very strong perception of operatic music; for in the opera, a singer's reputation will often do more for the music than the music itself, but in dancing every one can enter into, and be pleased with. Madame Flora Fabbri Brettin, however, is a worthy aspirant for fame; she dances with great lightness and precision, and her attitudes are not wanting in grace, though her limbs are perhaps not cast in the most graceful mould. The other ladies of this department dance with commendable vigour, and with varied success. Maritana and Le Diable à Quatre have formed the staple of performance during the greater part of the month; the ballet at the latter part giving way to the pantomime, which those must go to see who relish the kind of thing; for neither our limits nor inclination lead us on to describe it.

COVENT GARDEN.—MONS. JULLIEN, and his first-rate band, have been running a prosperous career; in addition to the other attractions, Sig. Sivori has been engaged to surprise and delight the promenaders. It will be needless to speak of his performance, as his merits are too well known to require comment at our hands. The concerts were carried on until the 20th; a *Bal Masqué* closing what may be called the first season. This fête, as a speculation, was highly successful; the theatre was most tastefully decorated. We are not disposed to say much for this species of entertainment; it is literally nothing more than a liberty or license granted, or rather taken, by the majority who go, to say and do what, at another time and other circumstances, would not be tolerated; however, owing to better arrangements, there was a less amount of positive misrule than on former occasions—at least, so it would appear. We hope this description of amusement, as at present managed, will not become popular amongst us.

EVENINGS WITH THE GREAT COMPOSERS.—Very dull affairs indeed, notwithstanding the imposing announcement. Mr. Lincoln may be, and no doubt is, a good musician and organ player, but as to a lecturer, he does not possess the necessary qualifications. An indifferent voice and delivery, and subject matter of a very twaddling description, made the last words of the announcement too applicable—these evenings were “great composers,” at least it so happened with us. A lecture worthy the name, should consist of something more than strings of set laudatory phrases; we expect analysis, comparison, and it would not be amiss if some information

could be given, not culled from the most obvious sources; as it is, those who know nothing whatever of the matter, may of course pick up some scattered crumbs, but those who do know a little, and come here with the hope of adding to their stock of information, will go away disappointed. Mr. Lincoln seems very fond of one phrase, viz.—“constructive skill,” as if a composer were a bricklayer, or master mason; he surely might concoct something more applicable to the art. These lectures ought to be called concerts with words and a glass of cold water, from which ever and anon Mr. L. took a gulp to wet his weary throat. The composing draughts during the last month, four in number, were compounded successively from Haydn, Cherubini, Cimarosa, and Mendelssohn, towards the last of these Mr. Lincoln seems to have a bias; but there is a sort of Mendelssohn mania among the musicians of this country, which, like other things, will have its day, and we are not surprised that Mr. Lincoln should be bitten by the prevailing taste. The musical illustrations were numerous on each occasion, and sometimes we think not altogether happily selected. A word or two at parting: whatever natural defects may exist, of course Mr. Lincoln is not to be subject to censure on their account, but we really advise him to study and make his lectures something more than set complimentary phrases on all and each of the individuals he is speaking about. Genius, refinement, elegance, grace, master mind, originality, were common as household gods; but we know all that, we want something to show that the lecturer is capable of elucidating his subject, that his mind has been at work, and not merely his trouble given to concoct set phrases. At the last concert Herr Kreutzer, a violin player, was introduced. The tones he produces are very soft and smooth, but there was nothing in his playing that calls for any particular remark.

PRINCESS'S THEATRE.—The management of this theatre, it would appear, are about to embark in the operatic line. Mdlle. Nau, who has been on these boards before, is spoken of as the *prima donna assoluta*. Negotiations are pending with Mr. Bodda, a pupil of the Royal Academy, as principal bass, and with Mr. Rafter, who is not yet known to fame, as principal tenor. Of Mr. Bodda we expect something from the favourable impression he made at one of the Academy concerts. The opera that is to be brought out is written by Mr. Linley, and we sincerely hope it may prove successful.

MISCELLANEOUS.

SWEETNESS INDICATED BY COLOUR.—In the Paris Academy of Sciences, Sept. 8th, M. Biot presented an apparatus which is used in Germany by the sugar manufacturers, to try the strength and character of their syrup, and also by medical men as a test in diabetic urine. It consists of two concentric prisms of nickel; one of which is fixed, while the other, to which the eye is applied, is moveable. They are separated by a tube which is filled by the solution to be examined. The two prisms are so placed that the light polarised by the first may be refused by the second. The solution is now introduced. A coloured object is seen, which is at first blue. The moveable prism is then turned until the object is yellow. The angle of rotation to arrive at this test gives, by means of a table the quantity of crystallizable sugar contained in the solution. *Athenæum*. Query? are tastes as colours divisible by the chromatic scale showing all objects of sense to be regulated by analogy with musical harmony. *Editor*.

MUSICAL MISERIES.

THE PIANO PLAYER.—No. 2.—By W. W.

For others miseries I feel,
And wish 'twas in my power to heal—
But tho' your singing student does
Issue his budget full of woes,
Dost think that all is play—ah! no,
With those whose forte is piano,
It is a doleful, dreadful time:
From early youth to manhood's prime.
Just think of me at six years old;
Compell'd alike thro' heat or cold,
Long hours to practice ev'ry day—
With scarce a moment left for play,—
Eight weary hours the scales to learn,
For years ere I one pound could earn.
Tied to my task by either leg;*
And e'en to move, obliged to beg—
Ah! often did I wish to cry,
And mourn my youthful misery;
As on each note with weary finger;
And o'er each rest, I long did linger—
But that I dread my parent stern;
Whose sole wish that I should learn—
And play I must—his only care;
If not, he knew not how to spare.
But then my master, he was kind,
And I did always comfort find,
As I thro' streets and crowds among,
To take my lesson trudged along.
And yet at times I oft did stop
To watch some young one spin his top;
And I did envy them their joy—
Their marbles round, or penny toy—
They seemed so to enjoy their fun.
But hark! the clock strikes, I must run;
Vain hope, I ne'er can reach the door,
'Twill take at least five minutes more.
The master he looks cross and cold,
And almost seems inclined to scold—
I think it best to try my luck,
And query this:—the clock 's not struck?
Not struck, quoth he, 'tis now long past.
Can't sir, said I, it must be fast,—
Fast, you young dog, 'tis you are slow,
And I must let your father know—
Oh don't Sir, if you'd save my skin.
Well, well, I won't—but just begin,—
My fingers o'er the notes now ramble;
Thro' "Cramer's Studios" I scramble,
Other's works I sometimes pop in—
Herz, or Henselt, Bennett, Chopin,
Moscheles is oft my lot, or
Often too I turn to Potter,
And then by way of finish *arlier*—
An air, concerto, or sonata.—
'Tis done, I seize my hat and book;
My master gives me one kind look,—
This once your lateness I look o'er,
Still mind it never happens more,
Or else your father I must tell—
But as you've practised pretty well,
There is a ticket for to-night—
I think 'twill give you great delight:
A player of some note you'll hear—
Now listen with attentive ear,
And mark his style of execution—
For this is music's elocution;
And then the touch—for there's more in it,
Than in a thousand notes per minute.
There, now go and be a good boy,
And you may yet some fame enjoy.
Away I go—I jump—I run—
I envy not the boys their fun—
In short, I eye them with contempt;
From vulgar joys I feel exempt.
I hasten home with wish to find,

* This is a fact with a celebrated player still alive.

My parent more in humour kind,
In hopes this once to get away,
And gain a short half-holiday.
Alas! for my scarce spoke request—
I only hear with fallen crest:—
"A holiday, indeed, you ask—
"And think thus to avoid your task?
"This laziness will never do—
"This minute to your practice go;
"Your master's kindness is well meant—
"Take care, then sir, I don't prevent—"
The rest to hear I cannot stay;
But hasten to my room away.
No matter, I my fate must bear—
So dash away the starting tear;
And of my play must be no lack—
Or else I catch it on my back.
And earnestly I look for night,
When I shall have my long'd delight:
The time, however, passes by,
And to the concert quick I fly.
Once there, I banish all my care,
And anxious o'er the bill of fare
I cast my glance with wish to see,
When plays this far-famed prodigy;
And first I hear—I thought how long?
A symphony, and then a song.
And now—'tis he!—the wondering cause
Of all this loud and long applause;
Graceful he bows to all around—
Then hush'd were all—no word—no sound—
I know not there I stood amazed,
And with fix'd look upon him gazed;
A chord he strikes—my eyeballs glisten!
And with ears erect I listen,
While first he plays with great éclat too
A short "allegro moderato,"
But after an andante movement,
Which seem'd as 'twere a dream of love meant;
Then like a shower of thick hail he
Dashes thro' "Presto finale."
'Tis done, I feel as if in trance—
I cannot cease my longing glance
Whilst greetings long, and loud from all,
On my bewildered senses fall;
But soon I wake to my own state,
And think what now must be my fate—
Such excellence I ne'er shall reach.
So I for life am doom'd to teach;
And home I go with dire foreboding—
With many woes my heart corroding,
Then think not all is play, ah, no!
With those whose forte is Piano.
But oh ye public if to play.
To you be mine—(I wish it may.)
If ever I may hap'ly cause
You pleasure, and gain your applause—
Though this, indeed, may bring relief,
And soften all my earlier grief;
Think calmly o'er what I relate,
And thank your stars 'twas not your fate.

Our Illustration of this month is a Portrait of VANDYKE, from a Portrait by himself, and drawn on stone by Mr. H. C. Maguire.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.

Contributions of Poetry by the Author of "Crime or the Gamester's Daughter."

A brief exposition of the Sequential System of Musical Notation, by H. C. Lunn, Associate of the Royal Academy of Music.

A Descriptive Essay of the Patent Clavic Attachment, invented by Robert Brooks, Jun. by H. C. Lunn.

THE FOLLOWING DECLINED WITH THANKS.

Fragments by Mrs. L.

Serenade, Oh! for a beam of love's own light, by H. A. B.

N.B.—All Contributions not accepted, are left at the Office of THE CONNOISSEUR, as the Editor cannot undertake to return them by post, mistakes having in consequence already occurred.

OH! HEAR THY LOVER'S TENDER VOWS!

WRITTEN & COMPOSED BY

S. I. OXLEY.

VOICE. *Andante e con Espressione.*

PIANO

FORTE.

p

Ped *

Ped

Connoisseur N° 10.

* *Ped* *
A Monthly Record of the Fine Arts, Music, and the Drama.

Oh! hear thy lo...vers ten...der vows, Soft whis-per'd In this si...lent hour.

Sotto voce

Listen while the sil...ver....

Ped *

moon Shines lovely o...ver wave and tow'r Shines lovely o...ver

wave and tow'r Lis...ten.

ad lib:

ad lib:

Oh! think of him who roams the night To watch the spot thy beau - ties bless..

Come come these long - ing eyes de - -

Ped *

light. Come in thy bloom - ing love.....li ness, Come in thy blooming

love...li...ness Come Come..

ad lib:

pp
 Soon love for du...ty I..... de _ part Soon must I from thy pre _ sence
 fly. With one sweet smile
Ped *
 cheer this fond heart Come love the par.....ting hour is nigh.
 Come love the parting hour is nigh. Come..... Come.
ad lib:
dolce *pp* Slen - tan - do

